

Synopsis

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The Influence of Television Advertisements

focusing specifically on children in Petaling Jaya. Private groups,

On Children In Petaling Jaya

government, regulatory agencies, consumer advocates, and social critics

have been making a wide range of comments about the content and

assumed impact of advertisement. This study was conducted in order to

identify advertisements which influence children and to specifically

examine the contents of these advertisements in order to study the

nature and extent of their influence. The age and income backgrounds

of the respondents are also dealt with here as variables, in an attempt

to identify their significance in determining the influence of adver-

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Latihan Ilmiah

Bagi Memenuhi Sebahagian

Daripada Syarat-Syarat Untuk

Ijazah Sarjana Muda Sastera

fair advertising industry.

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Jabatan Antropologi dan Sosiologi

Universiti Malaya

Kuala Lumpur

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The purpose of this study was to examine the degree of influence that television advertising have on children in Malaysia, focusing specifically on children in Petaling Jaya. Private groups, government, regulatory agencies, consumer advocates, and social critics have been making a wide range of comments about the content and presumed impact of advertisement. This study was conducted in order to identify advertisements which influence children and to specifically examine the contents of these advertisements in order to study the nature and extent of their influence. The age and income backgrounds of the respondents are also dealt with here as variables, in an attempt to identify their significance in determining the influence of advertisements on children. It was also the aim of this study to indicate the effects of television advertising on children so that appropriate steps can be made, if necessary, to achieve a truthful, accurate and fair advertising industry.

Adalah diharapkan yang hasil daripada kajian ini, sebagaimana terhad, It is hoped that these findings, however tentative and limited, will be useful to those who are concerned with "advertising to children". It is also hoped that these findings will be helpful in the mounting of other studies on children's perception towards advertising.

Sinopsis

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pengaruh dan kesan pengiklanan televisyen atas kanak-kanak di Malaysia, tertumpu khasnya kepada kanak-kanak di Petaling Jaya. Kumpulan-kumpulan persendirian, kerajaan, agensi-agensi penguatkuasaan, badan-badan pengguna dan ahli-ahli kritikal sosial telah membuat berbagai-bagai komen tentang isi kandungan dan kesan iklan-iklan yang mempengaruhi kanak-kanak khasnya, dan juga untuk mengkaji isi kandungan iklan ini untuk melihat elemen-elemen yang terdapat dalam pengaruh ini. Latarbelakang umur dan pendapatan para responden juga diambil kira dalam tesis ini sebagai 'variable' untuk mengkaji peranan mereka dalam menentukan pengaruh iklan atas kanak-kanak. Adalah juga menjadi tujuan kajian ini untuk menunjukkan kesan-kesan yang dibawa oleh pengiklanan televisyen supaya tindakan-tindakan yang sesuai boleh diambil jika perlu, untuk mencapai sebuah industri pengiklanan yang benar, tepat dan adil.

Adalah dikerapkan yang hasil daripada kajian ini, sebagaimana terhad, akan menjadi berguna kepada sesiapa yang berminat tentang pengiklanan kepada kanak-kanak. Adalah juga diharapkan yang hasil-hasil kajian ini akan membantu dalam pengendalian kajian-kajian lain tentang persepsi kanak-kanak terhadap pengiklanan.

Acknowledgements

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Deficiencies in this dissertation remain solely my own responsibility.

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Sebarang kekurangan di dalam penulisan ini adalah tanggungjawab saya sendiri.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As a practice, this chapter will serve as an introduction to the concepts as being used in this thesis. We will also be introduced to the problem being dealt with here, the scope of this study, the respondents involved, as well as the problems encountered during the course of this study.

Definition of Concept

Advertisements are often known as hidden persuaders because the advertising industry is one based on persuasive elements which are often not visible to the eyes of the laymen. The ability to persuade is generally acknowledged as "influence" that results from an understanding of deep human beliefs, values and attitudes.

Considering that advertising is based on the elements of persuasion and that its intent is that of persuasion, a British structuralist Varda Leymore wrote:

"Advertising is concerned with the use of symbols to effect the exchange of values. As such it is the focal point of the two most important communication processes in any society ... the exchange of signs and the exchange of money, goods and services."¹

As a communication system, advertising functions in much the same way as myth, so wrote anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. He defined the purpose of myth as that of providing a logical model capable of overcoming contradictions.² Myth and advertising both present potential conflicts and then scan the available answers to the problems before providing the answer, or answers that best fit the prevailing modes of behaviour, the accepted beliefs, attitudes and values of that particular society.³

Very much like myth, advertising acts to reduce anxiety. It re-states the basic problem of humanity and then offers a solution to them. To be socially acceptable, for example a consumer need only to use a particular toothpaste or deodorant. To be protected from catastrophe, he needs only purchase the right brand of insurance or smoke detectors. For financial security, attendance at a certain trade school or monthly deposit at a local savings and loan association will keep the consumer secure. In brief, advertising offers simple answers to the five human needs as categorized in "Marlow's Hierarchy of Needs".

As a media of advertising, it is by now truistic that television provides an invisible environment that may have a wide range of effects on their audiences. It is also true to say that in this modern era of science, technology and computers, advertising through television is a very persuasive and effective way to achieve desired results. It

is the most potent advertising medium ever devised. No innovation in modern advertising has set off such a wave of speculation as the development of commercial television. With sight plus sound plus motion it seemed like the answer to an advertising man's prayer - the next best thing to person-to-person communication. For the first time, it was possible to show a product, talk about it, and demonstrate it to millions of people at once.

Television advertising may on the surface, appear to be "hard-sell" persuasion, encouraging a change of habit or taste, but in reality it is conservative and tends to reinforce the status quo. Whether offering new products to try, or encouraging use of old one, advertising couches its persuasive appeals in terms of existing group norms and uses familiar themes and easily recognizable symbols.

For many of the manufacturers of mass products, the word "consumer" is synonymous with "childlike". It is not an exaggeration to say that many of these manufacturers would like the worst characteristics of children - selfishness, delight in the simple-minded, uncontrolled aggressiveness, and prejudice to survive into adult life.

"The more anxious, confused, and uncertain, and bewildered a society becomes, the stronger will be the role played by advertising."⁴

All the adjectives above describe clearly the characteristics which exist in children. In the process of growing up, children are almost always confused and unsure of many things. Therefore, for advertisers, the most ideal consumers are children because being confused and unsure, they are easily influenced by what they see, hear or feel. Children are also easily influenced by gimmicks and lies in advertisements; in other words, the greater the role played by advertisements.

It needs to be explained here that children are not necessarily individuals below the age of fifteen, twenty or even fifty. As the saying goes, there is a child in every man, or woman, for this matter; only the intensity differs. However, for the purpose of this study, we shall take the word children in its general meaning to avoid any confusion. Therefore, the children referred to here shall be individuals below the age of nineteen.

To the unsuspecting audience of television commercials, televisions are just breaks between their favourite television shows which allow them to go to the wash room or to fetch something. Some may treat advertisements as a must to ensure that the good shows are sponsored by somebody. Little does the audience know or realise that they are being 'forced' into watching something which might influence their buying habits and probably make consumers out of them.

Statement of Problem

This study is about the influence of television advertisements on children in Petaling Jaya. What we mean by influence of television advertisements here is the ability of advertisements to attract the children's attention, to make the children remember the advertisements or even more, the ability of advertisements to make the children interested in buying and possessing the goods advertised. Of course, the ability to actually make the children purchase the goods is considered a very high and successful degree of influence.

From the answers and data of the research, we will see whether the children in Petaling Jaya are influenced by the advertisements that they see on television. If the answer is in the affirmative, then the advertisements which are successful in influencing the children will be scrutinized to see what the elements of this success are. Likewise, the unsuccessful advertisements will also be examined to see where their failure lies.

Although advertising is a field often studied and written on, it is seldom studied from the aspect of its influence on children. Therefore, this study is carried out on the industry which is widely studied are related to the respondents' backgrounds. Among the aspects of the background which are looked into is the age of the respondents. We will check if the age variable plays any role in determining the influence of advertisements on children (i.e. are younger children more

inclined to be influenced by advertisements?). Family income is another aspect that will be looked into. We will see if family income is a variable that will determine the influence of advertisements (i.e. are richer children more likely to be influenced by advertisements).

Besides these determinants there will be others like the parents' education level (do more educated parents guide their children's buying habits better?), the language spoken at home, etc.

Also included in this study is the effects of these television advertisements on the children themselves. Among the matters that will

be considered are whether advertisements bring good or bad effects on the personality, development and buying habits of children. Also to be studied is the strength of this influence and whether or not it effects the children's everyday behaviour as well. All these will then enable us to predict what kind of consumers these children will grow up to be.

Study Objective

Scope of Study

Although advertising is a field often studied and written on,

it is seldom studied from the aspect of its influence on children.

Therefore, this study is carried out on the industry which is widely exposed to the everyday lives of our society through an important but often ignored point of view.

Advertising through television has become so much a part of our everyday lives that we have forgotten that advertisements were

produced in the first place by manufacturers to expand their market, and that these advertisements could carry misleading messages and themes to consumers.

Therefore, it is hoped and wished that after reading the report of this study, the concerned parties will be more aware of the "gimmicks" and "tricks" in "interesting" television advertisements so that this awareness could protect the consumers, especially children, from the exploitation of advertisers.

It is also hoped that this study will serve as a reference to any concerned parties, may it be government bodies, or independent bodies such as the consumer associations, which might want to improve the advertising system or to protect the interests of consumers from being exploited by sales gimmicks and any false claims of television advertisements.

Scope of Study

It is necessary to explain here that the scope of this study is not as wide as may be wished. This is due to the time limit imposed by the department and the faculty on the study. It should also be stressed here that there is limited resources and manpower in carrying out this study as the project is a one-man assignment.

Sampling However, despite all these setbacks, efforts have been made to have as wide a scope as possible and towards study as scientific and so representative as possible.

The area chosen here, which is Petaling Jaya is representative of all other sub-urban areas with the population, standard of living and development level which are more or less equal to Petaling Jaya.

As for the television advertisements which are being studied, they consist of many various kinds of goods. For the convenience of

this study, the goods taken into this study have been categorized into 8 groups as below:

- a) snacks
- b) nutritious food (represented by milk)
- c) fast-food
- d) detergent
- e) clothes
- f) toys
- g) cigarettes
- h) government messages.

The respondents taken from this study come from various parts of Petaling Jaya. There are altogether ninety of them. Further information regarding these respondents can be obtained below.

Sampling

The ninety boys mentioned are Chinese boys residing in various parts of Petaling Jaya, ranging from the exclusive parts of Petaling Jaya like Damansara Heights to the not-so exclusive parts of Petaling Jaya like Petaling Jaya State, etc. The respondents were chosen at random but care was taken to ensure that they fitted the criterion required.

It is hereby explained that only one sex group was chosen due to the lack of time and opportunity for the completion of this study. Considering the universally known fact that the rate of mental and physical growth of boys and girls vary in many different ways, only boys were chosen to represent the children in general to avoid any confusions and contradictions which may arise from taking both boys and girls as respondents.

Due also to the limited amount of time given to the completion of this study, only Chinese children were taken as respondents rather than all various races in Malaysia to avoid any confusion that may arise because of the different cultures of different races. These cultural

differences could bring differences in taste, behaviour, buying, habits, buying power, etc. Therefore it is wise if in this thesis only one race is taken to control racial differences. In this case, Chinese respondents were chosen and it is hoped that somebody else will study the other races in Malaysia in a study comparable to this.

It was also made sure that the respondents of this study are exposed to the television media. This means that they should either own a television set at home or that they have access to a television set. Just as importantly, they should also be watchers of television. This is all very necessary because we cannot measure the influence of advertisements in children unless we are sure that they are each exposed in one way or another to the television advertisements themselves.

After determining the criterion for the respondents, the chosen respondents were then divided into nine groups according to age group and family income variables. The divisions are as follows:

Age group	Family Income	Number of respondents
5-6	< \$1500	10
	\$1500 - \$3000	10
	> \$3000	10
12-13	< \$1500	10
	\$1500 - \$3000	10
	> \$3000	10
18-19	< \$1500	10
	\$1500 - \$3000	10
	> \$3000	10

Table 1.1 : Categorization of age and family income of respondents

Children aged 5-6 were chosen to represent the pre-school group: children aged 12-13 were chosen to represent the adolescents, and children aged 18 - 19 were chosen to represent the young adults. The

categorization was made in this manner to enable clear distinction of the different degrees of influence that television advertisements have on children from all age groups. This clarity and distinction may not be seen if the categorization had been 5-12, 13-17, 18-19 because the dividing line would not be very clear. A child aged 12, for instance may be just a week younger than another child of 13 in the next group and yet belong to the younger group.

The rather extreme division of income groups was also to get a more clear-cut distinction. The income of \$1500 and below was chosen as the minimum income group because \$1500 makes the average earning of the low income families in Petaling Jaya where the cost of living is considered quite high compared to rural areas. Likewise, the income range \$1500 - \$3000 was chosen to represent the middle class or the average income group. For the above average and the rich, the income determined is \$3000 and above. These divisions as determined here shall stay effective all through the length of this study.

From questioning the respondents, it was discovered that the language that the respondents speak at home is English followed closely by Chinese. It was also found that very few of these respondents speak Bahasa Malaysia at home. The breakdown is as follows:

- a) questionnaire method
- b) observation
- c) reference to printed matters - books, magazines, newspapers, documentations and others.

a) The Questionnaire Method

Respondents' Age and Family Income	Language Spoken By Respondents			Total (%)
	Bahasa Malaysia (%)	English (%)	Chinese (%)	
5 - 6 yrs	0	60.0	40.0	100
12 - 13 yrs	0	53.3	46.7	100
18 - 19 yrs	10.0	40.0	50.0	100
< \$1500	6.7	19.8	73.3	100
\$1500-\$3000	3.3	63.3	33.3	100
> \$3000	0	70.0	30.0	100

b) The Observation Method

Table 1.2 : Age and Family Income Variables Against Language Spoken At Home

Such are the background and the criterion of the respondents which are being used for this study.

Methodology of Study

Basically three methods were used to complete this thesis. These

methods are: Reference To Printed Matters

- questionnaire method
- observation, information was also obtained by referring
- reference to printed matters - books, magazines, newspapers, documentations and others.

a) The Questionnaire Method

More than a hundred copies of the questionnaire were prepared to be filled by the respondents themselves under the supervision of the writer or by the interviewer herself where the respondents are not able to read or write. This was considering that the respondents suitable for this study was only limited to boys who were Chinese and with particular economic backgrounds and age-range. Due to this particularity, a longer time than scheduled was taken to finish the survey. After all ninety questionnaires were filled according to the required criterion, the questionnaires were then analysed to obtain the ultimate answer or answers for this study.

b) The Observation Method

Considering that the topic of this study covers the influence of television advertisements on children, pains were taken to observe behaviour of children who were interviewed and the results were then successfully analyzed. Their behaviour, dressing and even their walking styles among others were observed to check if they have been influenced enough to use and wear the goods advertised or to act like the actors in the advertisements.

c) Reference To Printed Matters

Besides the questionnaire method and the observation method, information was also obtained by referring to existing materials written by writers and sociologists in the past. Amongst the materials used for references were books, magazines, critics, etc.

Problems Encountered During Study

One of the problems faced during the field-work was the difficulty to get the respondents who filled the criterion of age and family income as determined. This was considering that the respondents suitable for this study was only limited to boys who were Chinese and with particular economic backgrounds and age-range. Due to this particularity, a longer time than scheduled was taken to finish the survey.

Besides this, there was also the problem of getting the agreement of the respondents or their parents to be interviewed. This was probably due to the possibility that they mistook the interviewer as a sales person who was trying to sell something or that she was an investigator from the Tax and Revenue Department.

However, despite these problems, the respondents were interviewed and the results were then successfully analyzed.

Another problem faced was in determining the questions for the questionnaires because the variety of advertisements nowadays are enormous and it is rather difficult to determine which are supposed to be in and which are not. Finally however, a solution was found and the categories were made.

Other problems which were faced in this study were more minor ones and which were settled with the help and kind assistance of the supervisor and friends.

CHAPTER 2

References

LITERARY REVIEW

1. Varda L. Leymore, 1976. Hidden Myth. London : Heinemann.

Much has been written about advertising and even more has been written about children. There are however, very few writings and studies that look specifically at the relation between advertising and

3. Leymore, p.x.

4. Leymore, p.x. chapter, we will first touch on the various definitions and opinions on advertising and children individually so that at the end of this chapter we can discuss about the various relations that has been made and can be made between advertising and children.

On the definition of advertising itself there are many different opinions given by various experts in their fields.

Webster defined advertising as any form of public announcement intended to aid directly or indirectly in the sale of a commodity, in securing employment, etc.

To Rosser Reeves who made history as a creative head of one of the largest advertising agencies, Ted Bates and Company, advertising is the art of getting a unique selling proposition into the heads of the most people at the lowest possible cost.²

Gene Reichert mentioned that an advertisement has been defined as an identified sponsor's paid sales message about a product, a service,

CHAPTER 2

LITERARY REVIEW

Much has been written about advertising and even more has been written about children. There are however, very few writings and studies that look specifically at the relation between advertising and children.

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Gene Reichert mentioned that an advertisement has been defined as an identified sponsor's paid sales message about a product, a service,

or an idea delivered in a communications medium, such as newspaper and television, to an audience which is representative of the market for the offering.³

identical.

On the other hand, Leslie E. Gill⁴ explores the concept of advertising in a wider scope. To Gill, advertising is the process of informing and persuading which is an indispensable accessory to industrial progress. Advertising to Gill brings new ideas and inventions within the reach of the general public with the least possible delay. Advertising is also akin to teaching in that it seeks to influence the public by calling attention to his message and by concentration on their perception on the virtues and advantages of the advertised products. Gill is also of the opinion that the repetition plays an important part in assisting the public unconsciously to assimilate various points about the product, including committing to memory the name of the product.⁴

section of at least two major types of communication : that of signs and that of values."

Meanwhile, Varda L. Leymore defines advertising in a very unique and refreshing way.⁵ To Leymore, advertising functions like myth as a resolver of potential conflicts. It reinforces the accepted modes of behaviour by examining all the alternative solutions and then proving that the predominating answer is, for that society in given circumstances the best one. Advertising works a conservative face, she said, not concerned with revolutionizing the existing order of things but with preserving it.

Leymore also added advertising and myth are anxiety-

reducing mechanisms which re-state, on a deep level, the basic dilemmas

of the human condition and then offers a solution to them. They both obey the same laws of composition and are structured in the same manner. In other words, Leymore wrote, the process of coding and decoding is identical.

According to Leslie E. Gill⁷, the psychology aspect of advertising is. Leymore feels that advertising and myth also share some common themes. The most significant aspect of their comparison is that both obey the same laws of construction and the same rules of order and classification. Dynamic advertising has a diachronic as well as a synchronic aspect and each is repetitive and may be illustrated in many variations. To Leymore, although advertising structure is simpler than that of myth and lacks some of the detail of myth, it nonetheless functions as a form of myth. "It mediates between the abstract and the concrete; as well as between social values, cultural symbols and ordinary everyday consumption.it is a communication process and an intersection of at least two major types of communication : that of signs and that of values." ⁶

Leymore also found that advertising, like myth has two levels, a surface manifestation, and a hidden level which underlies the familiar surface representations and endows it with meaning. The second message is not immediately apparent and may not be decodable from a single viewing. In order to view the underlying structure, the advertising must be worked in a system. This total system may divulge a message that differs from that of each isolated advertisement. It flows continuously, sometimes slowly and quietly, as

Having classified the definitions of advertising, we will now look at what has been written about advertising from a psychological point of view.

According to Leslie E. Gill⁷, the psychology aspect of advertising involves the study of man's conscious and near-conscious activities. It deals with his mental and emotional reactions to the things he sees, feels, tastes, hears and smells. What goes on when he is attracted by something he sees and reads in an advertisement or poster? This question psychology attempts to answer. It is a subject of immediate practical interest to everyone engaged in publicity. Writing copy for an advertisement is, in fact, the very essence of applied psychology. It is the chief function of the copywriter to produce the basic ideas for advertisements campaigns. Knowledge of the psychological principles involved in attracting attention, arousing interest, and creating demand should enable him to execute his ideas for pictorial display and descriptive matter with a greater facility and success.

Gill further explains : Advertising is the process of making known. The successful advertisement brings into activity a chain of mental processes which, although occurring simultaneously or in close succession in the mind, have to be selected individually for the purpose of analysis and investigation. Mental processes such as attention, perception, memory, recall, imagination, suggestion and the rest rarely operate singly. The nature of human experience and consciousness is like a stream. It flows continuously, sometimes slowly and quietly, as

when the mind is in a tranquil, reflective mood. At other times, swiftly, turbulently, as when the mind is charged with emotion. It is the purpose of successful advertising to stir the stream of consciousness so that the potential purchaser responds favourably to the subject of the advertisement. Therefore, the designer aims first at attracting the public eye, then at arousing interest in the direction of desire in another. Here is where the persuasive skill of the copy-writer comes into play. Interest is sustained and can be turned into positive action when the individual's feelings, emotions and desires are stimulated; and still better when also his intellectual doubts are removed by convincing argument and a realistic interpretation of the facts. As old established advertisers know well enough, people respond readily to advertisements when their desire for possession of the object is reinforced by a certain conviction that ownership will bring some feasible benefit.

Vance Packard⁸ agreed very much with Gill. According to Packard, the possibilities of using the insights of psychiatry and the social sciences are so inviting that no one anywhere can be sure nowadays that he is not being worked upon by the depth persuaders. Packard also discussed about areas of our hidden aversions and about the way many of us are being influenced and manipulated.

Since this thesis is concerned with television as the media of children advertising, we will now see what has been said about television and its popularity.

The first Gary A. Steiner⁹ concentrated on a 1960 survey to explain the popularity of television. The survey covered peoples' television viewing habits, their attitudes to the medium in general, their reactions to specific types of television programmes, their views about children's television watching and attempts to control it and a great deal of information about the characteristics of the interviewers themselves. Resulting from that survey, steiner found that the population had a high regard for television in general. Television was perceived, then, primarily as an entertainment medium, offered to the public for their enjoyment and relaxation and embraced by most of them with pleasure and appreciation.

Raymond Williams¹⁰ dealt with television as a cultural force and also analyzed television as a particular cultural technology and looked at its development, its institution, its forms and its effects on its viewers.

Williams' view was then supported and confirmed by James Halloran.¹¹

Now that we know the role of television in our modern lives, the next step is to see what has been written about television advertisements specifically.

According to S. Watson Dunn¹², the television with sight plus sound plus motion seemed like the answer to an advertising man's prayer - the next best thing to person-to-person communication. For

the first time it was possible to show a product, talk about it, and demonstrate it to millions of people at once. It has not turned out to be merely a visual development of radio, as many thought. Instead it combines some of the features of radio, personal demonstration and the movies, and consequently special techniques had to be worked out to use it efficiently and effectively. Television grew very fast and blossomed overnight into a major advertising medium.

Feeling much the same way about television advertising are Gene F. Seehafer and Jack W. Laemman¹³. They wrote about the great change that has taken place in advertising, sales and marketing as a result of the electronic revolution of the past thirty years and especially the past ten. They also revealed on how to create television and radio programmes and commercials, the advertising agency, national television and radio advertise and other things.

Since our main subject in this thesis is children, it is then necessary to look for sources which explain all about child behaviour and development so that we may be able to understand their behaviour and their habits.

For this, let us look at the theory of Jean Piaget¹⁴ which is the most widely known theory of cognitive development. Piaget's boldest and most controversial claim is that cognitive development proceeds through a series of stages, a 'stage' being a period of time in which the child's thinking and behaviour in a variety of situations reflect

a particular type of underlining mental structure. These invariant stages describe changes in how children acquire knowledge about the world (genetic epistemology). In the first two years of life, the child constructs sensorimotor schemes based on physical action upon the world. The schemes become more intentional and more during that time. During the preoperational period, approximately ages 2 to 7, the child exploits his newly acquired symbolic ability. Despite the limitations of egocentrism, rigid thought, and limited role-taking and communication abilities, the child combines symbols into semilogical reasoning. During that time, knowledge is biased. Experience is always filtered through the child's current ways of understanding. The child's mind does not take pictures of reality. During the concrete operational period, roughly ages 7 to 11, the child acquires logicomathematical structure. Now thought is operational and consequently more flexible and abstract. Finally, during the formal operational period, ages 11 to 15, these operations are no longer limited to concrete objects. Operations can be performed on operations, verbal propositions, and hypothetical conditions.

The above stagelike changes involve changes in the structure of thought. Thought becomes increasingly organized, always building on the structure of the previous stage. Movement through the stages is caused by four factors: physical maturation, experience with physical objects, social experience, and equilibration. Experience brings cognitive progress via assimilation and accommodation. The

functional invariants help the child adapt to the environment by strengthening and stretching his current understanding of the world.

According to Cullingford, children are capable of intense appreciation and understanding. Piaget views children as active and self-regulating organisms that change by means of interacting innate and environmental factors. He emphasizes qualitative change, but identifies certain quantitative changes as well. The essence of cognitive development is structural change.

Another who attempted to describe children and their behaviours is Gene F. Seehafer¹⁵. He not only did that but also described how one can influence and persuade children to do something by arousing their emotions, drives, and ideals more than their intellect. According to Seehafer, the effectiveness of influence derives from the fact that most children are creatures of emotions, drives and pride rather than reason. Compliance with children to persuasion is voluntary and based on their judgement that certain behaviours enhance their well-being. Also on the art of persuading children, Seehafer wrote all about making verbal appeals, dramatizing, buttering up, selling up, challenging, using natural consequences, suggesting requesting, prompting etc. which are tactics which are often used in advertising.

Now that we have seen what has been written about advertising, television and children individually, we will see what has been written about children in their response to children.

Cedric Cullingford¹⁵ attempted to uncover a few things about the ways in which children learn, to give insight into the inner worlds

of children, and not only into the obvious images of television. It to attend to in the same way as a lesson in school.

According to Cullingford, children are capable of intense appreciation and the closest critical scepticality. They can be absorbed in a story and learn new information rapidly and efficiently. In every programme made by producers for television, there is a lot of "feedback" showing just such discrimination and interest they intend to create. Children are able to attend to the intended message of the programme.

Cullingford also found that the nature of children's response is such that those layers of the mind more prone to associate than analyse are as important as those that are attuned to certain tasks. Although the ability to recall information depends upon close attention, changes in opinion or attitude are actually inhibited by the same closeness of attention. Most of what is learned from television contrasts to the conditions of schools or experiments.

Cullingford feels that children need to make sense of the complex stimuli by simplifying them mentally. Children need to make sense of television in their own way even more than other experiences of perception, for they find it difficult to make distinction between memory and the products of their own fantasy, between perceptual images and their own imagination. Children learn to adapt, but they learn to adapt to what they expect to see more easily than to complex surfaces of programmes. The 'hidden' message contained implicitly in all that they watch is that they should be amused, and that television is dedicated to the art of entertainment. For this reason children find it

difficult to take television as seriously as critics, and difficult to attend to in the same way as a lesson in school.

Cullingford also found that the way in which children respond depends more on the amount that they see than on the nature of individual programmes. The distinctions between programmes and advertisements are not perceived as being essentially significant, even though their intentions could be hardly more different.

Children show consistent expectations of television. Their tastes are akin to those of adults, with a pervasive desire for entertainment that fulfils familiar norms. They resent those shows that make demands on them, even if having seen one, they afterwards recollect it more completely. Instead, their favourite programmes to which they show strong loyalty and to which they look forward, leave little impression behind. Children neither remember what they have seen of a familiar ritual nor do they wish to remember. Cullingford also found that the more children watch, the less they manage to recall or interpret. Their very styles of viewing show a laconic indifference to what is offered that makes television seem like a consistent background to other events. The part that advertising plays in their lives is a minor if pervasive one; fitting into other events, knowing its place and rarely of such high salience that children approach it with armed anticipation. On the contrary, children do not expect much from television apart from the fulfilment of a need for entertainment without demands.

Television becomes for children propaganda for itself, Cullingford wrote, for case of entertainment, for the fulfilment of the same expectations in a variety of different ways. For from analysing the meaning of the plot, or the significance of the information, children respond to the repeated images that they associate with the world of television.

Children obviously know the difference between the real and the fantastic, added Cullingford, but their view of television makes this distinction insignificant in their eyes. They are accustomed to being entertained, and actually learn to resent the demands made in television advertising is indeed popular with children. Nearly all documentaries that contain truths they deem irrelevant to them. The important point is that the more distinctions between the real and the fantastic are broken down in entertainment, the more of a contrast there is between the actually real and the fantastic in normal circumstances. The fantasy world of entertainment, by absorbing the real, contrasts the move with the world of work, with its responsibilities and its demands. The sophistication that children learn is that of being able to ignore the stimulation offered. The indifference to demands is subtly encouraged. The distinction between work and play is ironically maintained through the audience's response to a medium which ostensibly attempts to service both.

Children's reasons for liking advertisements underlined the pragmatism with which they were seeking to be entertained. A very high proportion of the children saw in an advertisement something that was a 'set' with watching television. They find their own dues to the

programmes as well as their own expectations. The amount of information presented, both aural and visual, demands a selective attention which children employ not in terms of plot or ratiocination but in terms of associations. Thus the constant state of half-hearted attention is more important than the distinctions between programmes children can make what they wish out of any programme they see.

To Cullingford, the four main reasons children give for liking certain We will now see one of the very limited sources which combined and related television advertising with children.

For this we refer again to Cedric Cullingford¹⁷ who found that television advertising is indeed popular with children. Nearly all children were consistent and positive in explaining their liking for advertisements. Even amongst those who did not express such strong pleasure, the ability to explain, discuss or recite from them was undiminished. There was a tendency amongst some of the younger boys to suggest with false bravado that 'they were a load of rubbish', but with the vent majority, while never citing advertisements as their favourite programmes, nevertheless clearly appreciated them as part of the entertainment offered by television. Most children felt that advertisements were short programmes in their own right, and the better for being repeated.

Children's reasons for liking advertisements underlined the pragmatism with which they were seeking to be entertained. A very high proportion of the children saw in an advertisement something that was funny or contained interesting characters or involved in a curious what they are being cajoled to do so.

incident. In nearly all children's favourite advertisements the product advertised is not as important as the style of the presentation. Children's liking for advertisements for their own sake bears an ambiguous relationship to children's knowledge of which products are being advertised.

To Cullingford, the four main reasons children give for liking certain advertisements are the personalities, the gimmicks, the humour and the songs. While some cited commercials for pragmatic reasons. Such as liking the end product most enjoyed the visual techniques, the cartoon characters and the sense of watching a short interesting, familiar and repeated programme, that would not be fatal to miss. Commercials with highly salient features maintain children's interest whatever the product. However, although children liked commercials for their own sake, they were almost certain to know the brand name. Children's knowledge of brand names, according to Cullingford, is extensive, just as their preference for specific advertisements is clear.

Cullingford also found that while children value the advertisements as entertainment, they are quite clear that advertisements are advertisements. They vary their attention within programmes and are clear about the progeny and purpose of commercials. Children are similarly clear about placing the advertisements within and between programmes. The awareness of advertising as a game reveals a growing ability amongst children to accept the terms in which the commercials work. They might be influenced to buy certain products, but they know what they are being cajoled to do so.

However, said Cullingford, the fact that advertisements are not absorbed with naive credulity does not mean that they are not remembered. Children remember advertisements better as they get older, especially if the advertisements are often repeated.

According to Cullingford, children, when they put their minds to it are perfectly aware of how commercials work. But they do not wish to be reminded of this; those advertisements which are obvious are the most disliked. Commercials are to children a natural part of television, not to be sought out but to be accepted. Unlike some parts of television they are clearly remembered.

Now that we have seen the various opinions of writers and researchers on the concepts of advertising, children, television and also on their relation with each other, we will now see what has been said about the effects of television advertising on children.

Together, Richard P. Adler, Gerald S. Lesser, Laurene Krasny Meringolf, Thomas S. Robertson, John R. Rossiter and Scott Ward¹⁸ gave a very detailed account of all the various effects of advertising on children. They listed down all the possible outcomes of advertising, dividing them into two groups: the intended effects of advertising, and the unintended effects of advertising.

Among the effects that they considered to be the effects intended by the advertisers on children are: attention to and recall of product brands and attributes, desire for advertised products and,

trial and repeat purchases or products or purchase requests to parents.

Unintended effects, on the other hand are effects that the advertising do to set out to bring but which bring more harm than good to the children, Adler et. al further divided the unintended effects into 3 groups: short-range, mid-range and long range.

Among the short-range effects are: confusion between program and commercial materials, failure to understand selling intent of advertisement; failure to comprehend product attributes or disclaimers; incorrect assessment of product performance or of satisfaction provided by product and, encouragement of unsafe behaviour through invitation.

In regard of the possible mid-range effects, most of the questions concern the influence of advertising children's development of consumer skills, their formation of attitudinal and behaviour patterns in drug and food usage, and their development of broader social attitudes.

Meanwhile, among the long-range effects are: encouragement or reinforcement of unhealthy or hazardous behaviour, encouragement or reinforcement of social values, and development of consumer skills.

Another of the many writers who wrote about the effects of advertising is Ron Goulart¹⁹. Goulart is different from Adler et. al in that he focuses more on the negative effects of advertising on children. He feels that the children in America will never grow up

because they are under attack and the attack has both physical and psychological effects on the children. The attack he meant is the attack by advertisers who only cared about publicity and not caring that they are cheating the children. Goulart then continued by giving chapters and chapters of instances where children are being 'assulted' by the unscrupulous manipulation of advertisers.

On the other hand, there are some writers who disagreed with Ron Goulart for only considering the negative effects of advertising without looking at the virtues and necessity of advertising in our changing world today.

One such writer is W. Duncan Reekie²⁰. He felt that one cannot condemn advertising to be in bad taste because if one does that, then one has to condemn many other things in society which may also be in bad taste as offensiveness means different things to different people. Given this, it is unreasonable to expect that advertisements will never contain material which somebody, somewhere, will judge to be in bad taste.

Reekie also feels that one should not blame advertising for being untruthful because the untruthfulness lies with the advertiser, not with advertising. One should not condemn advertising for appealing to the emotions by using eloquent phraseology, catchy music and as undesirable aspects of society as these are not undesirable aspects of society.

One should also not say that advertising make people buy what they do nto really need as modern society exists by producing goods

which people do not need. People's wants, both material and emotional, run far ahead of their basic needs for survival. Furthermore, although advertisements influence consumers, if a product proves unsatisfactory it will not be purchased again. Advertising can only sell goods which at least approach what the consumer 'really wants'.

Psychology, London: Hutchinson's University Library.

In reply to the criticism that advertising encourages 'branding', Reekie says that some loyalty to brand names may be the result of genuine consumer preference. Furthermore, a brand makes a product identifiable so that it can be avoided if unsatisfactory.

Reekie also feels that advertising can be advantageous to people who wishes to obtain coverage in the national media expressing and arguing their feelings about certain public issues. In other words, advertising may aid in achieving freedom of speech.

We see here that the subject of advertising is a very controversial and complex subject. We are left with a big question mark as to what kind of effects do television advertisements have on children, which is what we will try to find out in this thesis concerning the children in Petaling Jaya, specifically.

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CHAPTER 3

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- Favouring advertisements Influence Stage 2
 - Wish to "buy" items advertised Influence Stage 3
 - Actual "buying" of items advertised Influence Stage 4

CHAPTER 3

THE INFLUENTIAL ADVERTISEMENTS

It should be understood that each later stage is depicting a more influential advertisement. The ultimate target of every advertisement. We should also clarify here that the word "buy" refers

In this chapter, we will analyze the answers given by the respondents to the questionnaires, and from there try to see which are the influential/non-influential advertisements and the reasons for their success/failure.

Influence of advertisements on children was defined earlier as the ability to make them remember the advertisements, the ability to make them have a wish to possess the items advertised, and even more so, the ability to actually make them buy the items advertised.

Therefore, "influential" here refers to any advertisements which is successful in doing one or all of those things mentioned above. In fact, one thing leads to another. An advertisement which is attractive will be remembered and probably lead to sale of the items advertised later, though we must keep in mind that this is not necessarily so.

Since the influence of advertisements is consequential, we will

in this thesis hereafter refer to the stages as below:

Types of advertisements	Advertisements remembered	
	Number	%
Fast Food	74	12.9
Nutrition	78	13.1
Detergent	42	7.3
Clothes	36	6.3
Toys	36	6.3
Cigarette	36	6.3
Others	127	22.1
Total	573	100.0

Table 2.1 : Advertisements remembered by respondents.

It should be understood that each later stage is depicting a more influential advertisement with stage 4 being the ultimate target of every advertisement. We should also clarify here that the word "buy" refers not only to the physical purchase of tangible goods but also to the intangible such as ideas, policies, etc.

Keeping the definition of "influential" in mind then, we will now see which are the influential advertisements by going through each stage thoroughly.

To find out which are the television advertisements in Malaysia that are at Influence Stage 1 with the children in Petaling Jaya, the children were questioned as to which advertisements they could remember and were given leave to write as many advertisements as they could remember. In the analysis, the lists provided by the respondents were then categorized into types of items/goods and the result of the analysis is as below:

Types of advertisements	Advertisements remembered	
	Number	%
Snacks	51	8.9
Fast Food	74	12.9
Nutritious Food	78	13.6
Detergent	42	7.3
Clothes	36	6.3
Toys	2	0.4
Cigarette	163	28.5
Others	127	22.1
Total	573	100.0

Table 2.1 : Advertisements remembered by respondents.

We find here that the most remembered advertisements are the advertisements with cigarette names on them (28.5%). This is most interesting and surprising considering that cigarette advertisements are banned from appearing on the television screen by the Malaysian Government. Obviously, then, this ban does not bring the desired effect because through the interview, we found that the children are already familiar with the advertisements with the cigarette names, although the advertisements actually publicise clothes, tours, holidays, etc.

Note that more cigarette advertisements (we will call them so from now onwards) are remembered even compared to the ones that come under the column "others" (22.1.70) which include miscellaneous items such as insecticide, paint, insurance, banking, shopping centres, etc. Nutritious food advertisements come next in effectiveness coming to about 13.6% with Fast Food advertisements coming immediately after (12.9%) and snack advertisements (8.9%).

Omitting the category "others" because there are simply too many things that comes under it, we see that the most significant advertisements that fall under influence stage 1 and cigarettes, nutritious food, fast-food and snack advertisements.

After having seen which are the more remembered advertisements compared to the other advertisements, we now pause to consider the possible reasons for this difference.

One possibility could be that the items advertised or the advertisements themselves are more relevant to the children's interest. In checking this, let us refer again to Table 2.1. We find that the most remembered advertisements are the cigarette advertisements. In this case, we find that the advertisements with their animals, their high technology animation and their elements of fun and adventure are indeed what make the advertisements more remembered by children because most children love all these. In the case of nutritious food, fast food and snack advertisements, we can safely conclude that both the items advertised and the advertisements are more relevant to the children's interest compared to advertisements of detergent, clothes and others, which most children do not take an interest in.

Snacks	15	19.0
Fast Food	9	11.4
Nutritious Food	13	16.3
Detergent	6	7.6
Clothes	3	3.8
Toys	2	2.5
Cigarette	14	17.5
Others	13	16.3
Total:	75	100.0

Table 2.2: Advertisements appearing on television on

We must also not forget the possibility that these advertisements are more remembered because more of the advertisements appear on television per day compared to the others. To ascertain or deny this, let us look at the frequency of times all these advertisements appear on a normal week-day.

It is indeed possible that the children remember the cigarette, nutritious food, fast food and the snacks advertisements more because they see more of them on television per day compared to the other advertisements. In other words, the children remember these advertisements more because they are repeated more than the others.

Therefore we see that not only do children remember advertisements because they are relevant to their interests, they also remember

Types of Advertisements	Advertisements appearing	
	Number	%
Snacks	15	19.0
Fast Food	9	11.4
Nutritious Food	13	16.5
Detergent	6	7.6
Clothes	3	3.8
Toys	2	2.5
Cigarette	14	17.7
Others	13	16.5
Total:	79	100.0

Table 2.2: Advertisements appearing on television on a normal week-day

We find that it is indeed possible that the children remember the cigarette, nutritious food, fast food and the snacks advertisements more because they see more of them on television per day compared to the other advertisements. In other words, the children remember these advertisements more because they are repeated more than the others.

Therefore we see that not only do children remember advertisements because they are relevant to their interests, they also remember

better advertisements which are repeatedly aired for their viewing.

Another possibility why these advertisements are more remembered is because they are liked or favoured by the children, thus making them almost unforgettable to the children.

This matter of liking and favouring advertisements brings us to Influence Stage 2 where we will now analyze which are the favoured advertisements and whether there is any connection between Influence Stage 1 and Influence Stage 2.

For this, the respondents were asked in the questionnaire to name two of their favourite advertisements. The results are as in Table 2.3. The answers came as in Table 2.4.

Types of advertisements	Respondents favouring the advertisements			
	Number	Number	%	%
Snacks	1	52	57.8	0.9
Fast Food	15	3	3.3	16.7
Nutritious Food	10			9.0
Detergent	1	8	8.9	0.9
Clothes	1			0.9
Toys	0	10	11.1	0.0
Cigarettes	48	10	11.1	53.3
Others	6	7	7.8	6.7
Don't know	8			11.4
Total:	90	90	100.0	100.0

Table 2.3: Advertisements favoured by respondents for favouring advertisements

That means that cigarette and fast-food advertisements fall under the Influence Stage 2. Checking and comparing it to Influence Stage 1, we see that there is a vast similarity in the advertisements remembered and the advertisements favoured. Advertisements like cigarette advertisements and fast food advertisements are not only remembered but also liked. Therefore they have succeeded so far in achieving two stages.

Now that we know which are the favoured advertisements, there is a need to satisfy the curiosity as to why these advertisements are so favoured compared to the other advertisements. For this, the children were questioned as to why they favoured the advertisements that they named above. The answers came as in Table 2.4.

Reasons for favouring advertisements	Respondents	
	Number	%
- Interesting, attractive, nice, cute advertisements	52	57.8
- Quality/good goods	3	3.3
- Like the goods	8	8.9
- Like the characters in advertisements	10	11.1
- Don't know	10	11.1
- Other reasons	7	7.8
Total :	90	100.0

Table 2.4 : Respondents' reasons for favouring advertisements

Take note that 57.8% of the children like the advertisements of their choice because the advertisements were attractive and interesting. Another 11.1% like their favourite advertisements because they were attracted to the characters or the actors in the advertisements and another 11.1% yet did not know why they liked those advertisements. Some 7.8% said that they like the advertisements because of a variety of other reasons such as "the music is nice", "my friend is acting in the advertisements", "the clothes are nice", "there are cartoons in the advertisements", etc. Only 12.2% of the children managed to see beyond the advertisements and state that they like their favourite advertisements because these advertisements show quality goods and goods that they like.

Therefore, we can safely say here that the advertisements which would most likely be influential to the children in Petaling Jaya are attractive and interesting advertisements which have nice music and beautiful people in them, and also which are constantly and often repeated.

To countercheck this, let us perhaps look at the more unpopular advertisements and see if these advertisements are similarly disliked because of the absence of the above elements in them.

For this, the respondents were asked again to name two of their most disliked advertisements. The answers given can be seen in Table 2.5.

Types of advertisements	Respondents who disliked the advertisements	
	Number	%
Boring	22	24.4
Snacks	14	14.4
Stupid/ridiculous	12	13.1
Fast food	2	2.2
Do not like the characters in advertisements	8	8.9
Nutritious Food	8	8.9
Detergent	13	14.4
Clothes	8	8.9
Other reasons	13	14.4
Toys	0	0.0
Don't know	30	33.3
Cigarettes	3	3.3
Others	19	21.1
Don't know	23	25.6
Total :	90	100.0

Table 2.5 : Advertisements unfavoured by respondents

Notice that the least liked, or rather, the most disliked

advertisements were the snacks and the detergent advertisements which

are really irrelevant to the interests of the children.

When the respondents were asked as to why they disliked the

mentioned advertisements, these were among their answers (Table 2.6).

Reasons for Dislike	Respondents	
	Number	%
- Boring	22	24.4
- Stupid/ridiculous	12	13.1
- Do not like the characters in advertisements	7	7.8
- Other reasons	13	14.7
- Don't know	30	33.3
Total	90	100.0

Table 2.6 : Respondents reasons for unfavouring advertisements

We see here that many of them did not know why they disliked the advertisements (33.3%). Some who knew (24.4%) said it was because the advertisements were boring while some (13.1%) felt that the respondents felt that the advertisements were stupid and ridiculous. Here also, we find that there are children who did not like the advertisements because they did not like the characters in the advertisements.

From the results of the comparison, we see that the attractiveness of advertisements is indeed a very essential element in successful advertisements. Just as 57.8% of the respondents liked their advertisements because they were interesting, likewise 24.4% of the same total of respondents disliked other advertisements because they were boring.

To understand this fully, it is perhaps necessary to first see the advertisements that are considered interesting and those which are considered boring. For this purpose, we will take one example from each category and compare them.

For an example of what is considered an interesting advertisement, let us take the cigarette advertisements. We shall focus on the particularly popular series of advertisements of one brand of cigarette, i.e. Benson and Hedges.

This series consists of beautifully illustrated advertisements of the Benson and Hedges Gold Centre. The advertisements have been done so imaginatively, making the items in gold come alive to the music and rhythm of the Benson and Hedges theme song. Nothing seems to be amiss in the advertisements. Everything seems to be perfect. (Please refer to figures 1, 2 and 3).



Figure 1 : "Benson and Hedges" advertisement



Figure 2 : "Benson and Hedges" advertisement

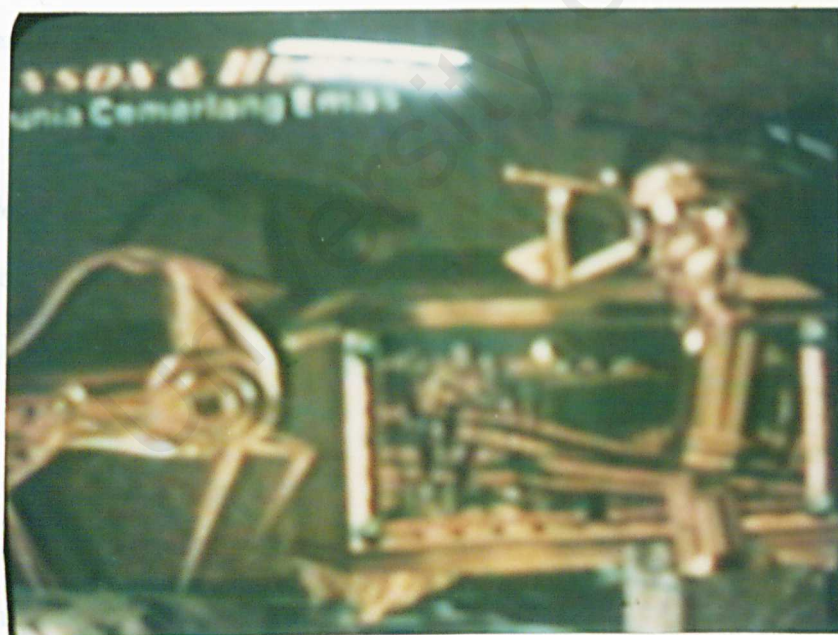


Figure 3 : "Benson and Hedges" advertisement

This series of advertisements is vivid enough to enchant the children, bringing them to a different world where everything is gold and magical. These advertisements seem to be their dream come true.

That is the specialty of these "Benson and Hedges" advertisements. So much so that the children's comments on this series of advertisements are "classy", "imaginative", "interesting", "unique", "wow!", etc.

So there is an example of an interesting advertisement. It entertains, fulfils dreams, enchants while promoting its product at the same time.

Other cigarette advertisements are almost equally as interesting to the children because they show holiday spots, fun-filled games, beautiful people, and lots of adventure which are all appealing to children.

On the other hand, let us take the detergent advertisements to represent the advertisements considered 'boring' in the children's opinions.

For this, we shall focus on one detergent advertisement, i.e. "Fab". Here is how the advertisement goes:

We first see a new washing machine being installed in Mrs. Wong's house. A nosy neighbour comes to share the happy moment. Mrs. Wong then asks the technician what powder she should use for her new washing machine. He recommends to her "Fab" unhesitatingly, which the nosy neighbour quickly agrees with.

The nosy neighbour then explains how the "Fab" detergent works to clean more effectively than other detergents. Mrs. Wong agrees with both of them and the nosy neighbour says, "Ha! Got any more tougher stains?" and the technician continues, "with Fab, you will have no problem". The advertisement ends with all three of them laughing.

To the children, that is an example of a boring advertisement. Notice there are no elements of fantasy, fun, adventure, etc., as there are in the cigarette advertisements. Everything is so mundane and so down-to-earth. This kind of advertisements does not appeal to children, in other words "bor.....ing".

The other detergent advertisements have almost the same theme as the "Fab" advertisement : dirty laundry - new detergent recommended - try it - very effective - adopt new detergent. All this bores the 'young' audience who usually have nothing to do with dirty laundry, and who do not find doing laundry the most interesting of chores.

Another thing that we discovered here is that most children do not know why they react in certain ways to various advertisements. Here, 33.3% of the respondents did not even know why they disliked the advertisements just as 11.1% of the same respondents did not know why they favoured other advertisements. So here we can deduct another element which can perhaps be essential in planning a successful advertisement. This element is the ability of advertisements to communicate

the attractiveness and advantages of owning the good advertised to the subconscious minds of the children. In other words, the ability to make the children be attracted to the advertisements not only consciously but unconsciously as well.

In the Dutch Lady advertisement, we see two boys talking about

the milk. For clarity and deeper understanding, let us look at the advertisements which the children considered to be their favourite advertisements but could not pin-point the reason for their liking. Through analysis, it is found that such advertisements are as below. (Table 2.7)

Concerned advertisements	Respondents	
	Number	%
Snacks	2	2.2
Nutritious Food	3	3.3
Cigarette	2	2.2
Others	3	3.3
Total :	10	11.0

Table 2.7 : Advertisements which are favoured for unknown reasons

Boy A: Mummy said Dutch Lady Milk is good for me. It has got lots of protein and nutrition to make the body strong and healthy.

Now that we know which advertisements are the ones that have managed to get the attention and favour of the respondents without them knowing why, let us examine the reason why and how? ...mmm... very delicious. Is that right? Ri.....ght!

To do this, we will take for example the nutritious food milk advertisements. Here we pick the most popular one, i.e. "Dutch Lady" advertisement.

On the surface the advertisement may seem quite ordinary but as we found. In the Dutch Lady advertisement, we see two boys talking about the milk while drinking it with lots of gusto and enthusiasm.



Figure 4: "Dutch Lady" advertisement

The dialogue:

Boy A: Mummy said Dutch Lady Milk is good for me. It has got lots of protein and nutrition to make the body strong and healthy.

Boy B: Dutch Lady Milk also makes my bones and my teeth strong.

Boy A: Moreover, the taste of Dutch Lady Milk is ...mmm... very delicious. Is that right? Ri.....ght!

Besides the dialogue, the narrator explains about how the milk can be prepared.

On the surface the advertisement may seem quite ordinary but as we found out from the respondents, this advertisement appeals to them although they do not know why. So what is it about this advertisement that appeals to the subconscious minds of the respondents? Let us look at the advertisement carefully.

Starting from the beginning we see two very cute and adorable boys. This could be one of the reasons for the popularity of this advertisement. The younger boys look at these two boys in television as their peers while the older boys look at them as a memory of their youthful days. It is a pleasant appeal, especially considering that the boys are cute in action and in their childish manner of speech.

Also, because the characters are young, as the respondents are, the respondents are able to relate to them better than if the character used is an old lady talking about 'Dutch Lady' milk.

Another possible appeal of this advertisement is that it has not much direct sales-talk. The whole scene seems to be perfectly natural - two boys talking about their milk. That is definitely more appealing, surely, than having a businessman looking at you in the eye from the television screen and telling you the qualities of the product.

Moreover, the boys' expression and gusto while drinking their milk makes the milk seem so delicious and so tempting. This sort of thing appeals to the respondents because they have got a lot of zest for life and everything that it has got to offer - the food, the sunshine, the fresh air, the fun, etc.

Therefore we see that for an advertisement to appeal to the respondent, children, either in a conscious or unconscious way, these elements must be present:

Concerned advertisements		Respondents	
		Number	%
Snacks		5	5.6
Fast Food		5	5.6
		10	11.2
Total		33.5	

- 1) pleasant characters/actors
- 2) relation to the audience
- 3) natural conveyance of message - no direct sales-talk
- 4) lots of life in the advertisement

Table 2.8 : Advertisements which are disliked for

Now let us look at the reason why and how these advertisements fail to influence the respondents' minds subconsciously. To do this, we either consciously or unconsciously, let us then look at the advertisements which are considered unpopular so that we will be able to compare and see whether the absence of those elements mentioned above is what makes the advertisements unsuccessful in influencing the unconscious minds of the respondents.

'Nippon' painted house. The actor talks to the audience and tells of the qualities of this particular brand of paint, while demonstrating how lasting the 'Nippon' paint is compared to other brands of paint. At the end of the advertisement, we see the house literally being covered by a shield, sheltering it from the storm and rain.

Let us first look at the advertisements which fit into this category:

Concerned advertisements	Respondents	
	Number	%
Snacks	5	5.6
Fast Food	5	5.6
Nutritious Food	5	5.6
Clothes	5	5.6
Others	10	11.1
Total :	30	33.5

Table 2.8 : Advertisements which are disliked for unknown reasons

Now let us look at the reason why and how these advertisements fail to influence the respondents' minds subconsciously. To do this, we will take an advertisement under the column 'others' i.e. "Nippon Weather Shield", a brand of emulsion paint.

The "Nippon" advertisement consists mainly of sales-talk and exhibition of a 'Nippon' painted house. The actor talks to the audience and tells of the qualities of this particular brand of paint, while demonstrating how lasting the 'Nippon' paint is compared to other brands of paint. At the end of the advertisement, we see the house literally being covered by a shield, sheltering it from the storm and rain.

Now that we have seen an example of an advertisement in this category, let us compare it to the Dutch Lady advertisement and see if it has the elements necessary for popular advertisement. We shall go from one element to another:

- 1) pleasant characters - The nippon definitely does not have this, since it only has one actor - salesman trying to sell the product. This does not appeal to the children at all.
- 2) relation to the audience - It is no wonder that the Nippon advertisement does not appeal to children. It does not have any relation or relevance to the interests of the children. Children cannot identify themselves to anything in the advertisement.
- 3) natural conveyance - There definitely is nothing natural about this advertisement. Everything is so businesslike and crisp.
- 4) lots of life in the advertisement - Needless to say, there is nothing lively in this advertisement. There is only a serious salesman talking about serious business and then facing the storm and rain. There is no sense of fun and adventure, etc.

So there, we have seen what makes for the popularity or unpopularity of advertisements, (either consciously or unconsciously) among the young audience.

To explain why the respondents were not able to point out the reasons for their liking or dislike for certain advertisements, we account it to their young age and also to their indifference. It is quite natural for young people not to think deeply into why they feel certain things. They only know whether they like or dislike certain things and let their thoughts stop there. That is why many of our respondents could not pin-point their reasons for their feelings towards the advertisements, which is also why advertisers who want to succeed in getting the young audience's attention should include in their advertisement the elements that we have just discussed, which will definitely appeal to the young audience, either consciously or unconsciously.

From the comparison between the popular and unpopular advertisements, we also find that the two groups share one thing in common in their attempt to influence the children : both groups have managed to make the children forget that the main thing in the advertisement is the goods advertised and that the objective of advertisement is to promote the sale of goods. For proof, we see that only 10% of the children realised that they liked certain advertisements because of the goods advertised while only 6.67% of the same group of children realised that they disliked some other advertisements because they disliked the goods advertised.

Therefore, we can safely assume here that children watch advertisements not for the information of goods available in the market but for the enjoyment of watching the advertisements. As a result they evaluate their liking or dislike for a certain advertisement based on the attractiveness of the advertisement or whether the advertisement is interesting rather than on the quality of the goods themselves.

It is therefore clear here that among the essential elements of successful advertisements are that the advertisements are relevant to the interests of the audience, that they are attractive and interesting, that the advertisements can communicate to the conscious as well as to the subconscious minds of their audience, that the advertisements use beautiful music and people in their advertisements that they can make their audience forget that they are actually advertising and that they are repeated often.

Up to this level, we have seen all that it takes to make the audience remember and like advertisements. Now we will see as to how really influential and effective these advertisements are. Are the remembered and favoured advertisements likely to arouse enough curiosity in the children to make them have a wish to buy the goods advertised?

This brings us to the Influence Stage 3, that is the wish to buy the goods advertised. To ascertain this, we have questioned the respondents as to whether they would buy the goods that are in their favourite advertisements.

The answer from the respondents:

Answers	Respondents	
	Number	%
- Yes, because I like the advertisement	43	47.8
- Yes, because I need the goods advertised	13	14.4
- Yes, because my friend has the goods advertised	2	2.2
- No	32	35.6
Total :	90	100.0

Table 2.9 : Would respondents buy the goods in their favourite advertisements?

What we find here is that 64.4 % of the respondents who liked the advertisements are willing to buy the goods for a variety of reasons. This means that the advertisements have reached the Influence Stage 3.

However, there are some of the respondents who although like the advertisements are unwilling to buy the goods. Likewise, we must also remember that there is a possibility that there are some respondents who although do not like the goods advertised are willing to buy the goods because they might need them. For example, nutritious food, detergent, etc. Therefore we should take note here that favoured

advertisements need not necessarily reach Influence Stage 3 and unfavoured advertisements need not necessarily fail to reach Influence Stage 3.

In comparison, however, it is quite clear that there is quite a great likelihood that the favoured ads will bring sale to the advertised.

We have explored in Chapter 3 the Malaysian television advertisements, their influence on our sample of children in Petaling Jaya, and the elements of success and failure in some of them. Based on the analysis of our data, we have also made certain assumptions as to what are the essential elements of successful advertisements.

So far in this chapter, we have seen which are the advertisements which have succeeded in bring remembered, favoured and which have sparked off a wish in the respondents to buy the goods advertised, and the reasons for this success. We have also seen the advertisements which have failed in these aspects and why.

It would be wise to now turn our attention to the ultimate Stage, that is, the Influence Stage 4. What determines whether this stage is achieved or not lies heavily on the respondents themselves - their affordability, restrictions from their parents, their age, etc., which we will see more of in Chapter 4.

Here, we will again use the four stages of influence as in Chapter 3 to explore the relation between age and family income variables against the influence of advertisements.

CHAPTER 4

DETERMINANTS OF ADVERTISEMENTS'

INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN

We have explored in Chapter 3 the Malaysian television advertisements, their influence on our sample of children in Petaling Jaya, and the elements of success and failure in some of them. Based on the analysis of our data, we have also made certain assumptions as to what are the essential elements of successful advertisements.

In so far, we have only looked at the influence of the advertisements in consideration of the advertisements themselves. In this chapter, we will explore the other side of the story. That is, we will now consider how personal background factors determine the influence that television advertisements have on children.

Among the important variables here are age and family income of the children. In this chapter, we will see how, if indeed, these variables determine the influence of advertisements on children in Petaling Jaya.

Here, we will again use the four stages of influence as in Chapter 3 to explore the relation between age and family income variables against the influence of advertisements.

In Influence stage 1, that is, the stage of remembering advertisements, we will see if age and family income differences between the respondents affect their ability to remember and to register advertisements that they see into their minds.

We will first look at the role of the age variable. Respondents from all 3 age groups were questioned and asked to name the advertisements that they could remember. The number of advertisements that each age group stated are as in Table 3.1.

Respondents' age group	Number of advertisements
5-6	126
12-13	211
18-19	236
Total	573

Table 3.1 : Age variable against number of advertisements remembered

Age group	Yes (%)	No (%)	Sometimes (%)	Total (%)
5-6 yrs	36.7	53.3	10.0	100.0
12-13 yrs	56.7	6.6	76.7	100.0
18-19 yrs	10.0	50.0	40.0	100.0

We see here that the younger the children are, the less are the advertisements that they can name compared to the elder children.

There could be a few reasons for this.

Table 3.2 : Age variable against parents' restrictions on television viewing

Firstly, we would think that children's ability to remember things is less efficient if compared to elder children's ability. This

is relevant to Piaget's theory¹ that a child's cognitive development (i.e. age related changes that occur in mental activities such as attending, perceiving, learning, thinking and remembering) is inter-related with physical growth, maturation and, social and personality development¹.

We must also take into consideration that it is possible that the younger children cannot remember as many advertisements as their older counterparts because they see less television per day due to the restrictions from parents. To confirm/reject the assumption that restrictions from parents regarding television is tight on the younger children and more lax when the children grow older, all 90 respondents were question : "Do your parents restrict you from watching television?" The answers can be found in Table 3.2.

Respondents' Age group	Any parents' restrictions?			Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Sometimes (%)	
5-6 yrs	36.7	53.3	10.0	100.0
12-13 yrs	56.7	6.6	76.7	100.0
18-19 yrs	10.0	50.0	40.0	100.0

Table 3.2 : Age variable against parents' restrictions on television viewing

We see that we have now confirmed that the younger the children are, the more are the restrictions placed on them regarding watching television.

It is now necessary to see how far does this restriction go and how exactly is the nature of children's television watching habits -

How long do they actually spend in front of the television per day?

(Table 3.3).

Respondents Age Group	Hours of television viewing per day			Total (%)
	< 1 hour	1-3 hours	> 3 hours	
5-6 yrs	26.7	60.0	13.3	100.0
12-13 yrs	6.7	80.0	13.3	100.0
18-19 yrs	10.0	60.0	30.0	100.0

Table 3.3 : Age variable against hours of television viewing per day

We see that the younger children do not watch as much television as the older children and as such they are exposed to less advertisements, which could be another explanation why they can remember less number of advertisements.

Another explanation yet could be that the younger the children are, the less they remember because there are less things that are relevant to their interest. Considering that young children are very

simple and naive individuals with very simple needs and demands if compared to older beings. To explain this, it would be wise if we looked at the pattern of the advertisements that our respondents named as the remembered advertisements. (Table 3.4).

Respondents Age Group	Remembered advertisements								Total (%)
	Snacks (%)	Fast- Food (%)	Nutri- tious (%)	Detergent (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Ciga- rettes (%)	Others (%)	
5-6 yrs	10.3	38.9	17.5	12.7	4.0	1.6	12.0	3.2	100
12-13 yrs	9.5	6.6	21.3	9.0	6.6	0	22.3	24.6	100
18-19 yrs	7.6	4.7	4.7	3.0	7.2	0	42.8	30.1	100

Table 3.4 : Age variable against advertisements remembered

It is interesting to note that it is indeed true that the most popular and most remembered advertisements among the younger children (5-6 year olds) seems to be advertisements of goods that are closer to their needs and wants such as Fast Food Advertisements, Snack Advertisements, and Toy Advertisements. To the teenagers (12-13 years old), the most popular advertisements are advertisements on food, which is natural, considering that they are growing up and are facing that "always hungry" stage. They are also interested in cigarette advertisements, presumably because they are also in the stage where they are ever curious to try everything and anything and where they face various problems of growing

up. They share this interest in cigarette advertisements with their older counterparts (18-19 years old) who also remember many various cigarette advertisements besides their interest in clothes advertisements, owing perhaps to their need to prepare an impressive and manly image for the world that they are about to face.

Before we begin analysis, it is necessary to explain here that a per. It is now obvious that the respondents remembered most standard advertisements of items that are closer to their needs and wants. At this point it would perhaps be suitable to recall what was said about the Selective Perception: their parents'/guardians' income and standard of education. (Table 3.5).

"Learning and motivational variables such as novelty, interests, curiosity and emotional involvement determine attention in different ways, depending on the individual person."²

"The main characteristic of attention is Selection.

The oriented response selects the sensory input from the myriad environmental stimuli impinging on the organism. Attention seems to perform a further selection of the input thus received. It selects,

as it were, from the stimuli impinging on the receptors those which are to control the organism's behaviour"³

Now that we have seen how the age factor plays a role in determining whether a certain advertisement is to reach the Influence Stage 1, in this section we will see how family income factor influences the susceptibility of respondents to advertisements.

Before we begin analysis, it is necessary to explain here that a person's income in Malaysia depends largely on his/her standard of education. The higher educated a person is, the more financially secured he is. For proof of this, look at the information given by the respondents regarding their parents'/guardians/ income and standard of education. (Table 3.5).

Respondents' Family Income	Level of Respondents' Education				Total (%)
	Never (%)	Until Form 3 (%)	Form 3 and above (%)	Universities and others (%)	
< \$1500	20	40	40	0	100
\$1500-\$3000	3.3	13.3	53.3	30	100
> \$3000	6.7	3.3	36.7	53.3	100

Table 3.5 : Income variable against respondents level of education (\$1500 - \$3000) group compared to the difference between the middle

It would be wise for us to keep this information in mind as it might later help us to understand certain things about the influence of advertisements on their respective children, who are our respondents.

To check if the income variable plays a role in determining the achievement of Influence Stage 1 by the relevant advertisements, we refer again to the answers given earlier by the respondents about the advertisements that they can remember, only this time, we will look at it from the view of family income. The number of advertisements that each income group stated are as follows. (Table 3.6)

Respondents' Family Income	Total Advertisements Stated	
	Number	%
< \$1500	178	30.5
\$1500 - \$3000	200	34.3
> \$3000	205	35.2
Total	583	100.0

Table 3.6 : Income variable against total advertisements stated

From the list above, it would seem that the children from more financially secured families tend to remember more advertisements than children from less wealthy families. We see that there is more difference between the low income (< \$1500) group and the middle class (\$1500 - \$3000) group compared to the difference between the middle class and the wealthy (> \$3000). We will now try to find logical and realistic explanations for this difference so that we will be able to see the role of the family income factor in determining the achievement of Influence Stage 1.

Since there is very little difference in the total of advertisements remembered among the three income groups, it would be difficult to explain the direct effect of income towards Influence Stage 1. Therefore, we shall take into consideration the indirect implications and qualities that come with respective income groups which will in turn affect the advertisements' achievement of Influence Stage 1.

One of the indirect implications or qualities that come with as income group that we are talking about here is exposure of children from various families to television.

Let us look at pattern of hours of television watching as opposed to family income (Table 3.7).

Respondents' Family Income	Hours of television watching per day			Total (%)
	< 1 hour	1-3 hours	> 3 hours	
< \$1500	26.7%	70%	3.3%	100
\$1500 - \$3000	6.7%	76.7%	16.7%	100
> \$3000	10.0%	53.3%	36.7%	100

Table 3.7 : Income variable against hours of television watching per day

We find that the children from the low income group are less exposed to television if compared to the children from middle class group which in turn are less exposed than the wealthy group.

The reason for this difference in exposure among the income groups is probably due to the fact that children from the lower income groups are burdened with more responsibility to help their parents with chores and businesses as compared to their wealthier counterparts, and thus having less time to watch television. As far as our respondents are concerned, we found this condition to be true from the conversation with them.

Therefore, it would not be wrong to deduce that one of the reasons why children from lower income families remember less advertisements is because they are less exposed to television, and thus, less exposed to television advertisements.

Another implication that comes with income group is also relevance of advertisements to the affordability of the respondents. There is a possibility that the less wealthy children remember less compared to their wealthier counterparts because they realise the limit of their affordability and unconsciously shut off the temptation of things that are not within their family budget. Maybe to confirm or reject this possibility, we should look at the kinds of things that the respondents of various income groups can remember. (Table 3.8).

Respondents' Family Income	Remembered advertisements								Total (%)
	Snacks (%)	Fast Food (%)	Nutritious Food (%)	Detergent (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Cigarette (%)	Others (%)	
< \$1500	6.7	14.6	17.4	7.9	5.1	0	23.0	25.3	100
\$1500 - \$3000	9.5	14.0	14.0	7.0	5.5	1	29.5	19.5	100
> \$3000	9.8	9.8	14.1	6.8	7.8	0	30.7	21.0	100

From the answers, we find that it is true that the wealthier children remember more advertisements of luxurious items such as snacks, toys and clothes compared to their less wealthy counterparts.

So here we see again another example of selective perception. The children in this case only remember what is relevant to their affordability and unconsciously shut-off the unattainable so as not to be disappointed.

For this, we refer to something that was written about Selective Perception.

"Selection occurs by filtering out or blocking information at some level in the information processing system so that only a certain amount of input is allowed at one time."

"The selective process of attention seems to have two main parts. First, attention may be conceived as an initiating process which supports certain sensory inputs. That is attending to a stimulus magnifies its influence. Second attending to a stimulus attention also serves to reduce the influence of competing stimuli."⁵

Now that we have seen how the age and income variable play their role in determining Influence Stage 1, we shall see if these variables do the same in determining Influence Stage 2 i.e. favouring advertisements.

As usual, we begin with the age variable by noting what are the advertisements that each age group favours or likes. (Table 3.9)

Respondents' Age	Favoured advertisements									Total (%)
	Snacks (%)	Fast Food (%)	Nutritious Food (%)	Detergents (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Cigarette (%)	Others (%)	Don't know	
5-6 yrs	0	200	13.3	3.3	0	0	46.7	6.7	10.0	100
12-13 yrs	3.3	13.3	13.3	0	3.3	0	53.3	10.0	3.3	100
18-19 yrs	0	16.7	6.7	0	0	0	60	3.3	13.3	100

Table 3.9 : Age variable against pattern of advertisements favoured

older child We find here that the tastes of the respondents from all three age-groups are almost similar. From the table we see that they like/favour the same kinds of advertisements although their interests in the goods themselves vary greatly.

It would perhaps be interesting to see the reasons for their liking for the popular Fast Food, Nutritious Food and Cigarette advertisements and see if the various age groups have similar reasons for their liking. To see this, let us look at the answers given by the respondents to the question : "Why do you like the advertisements that you named above?". (Table 3.10)

Respondents' Age	Reasons for favouring advertisements						Total (%)
	Interesting/nice advertisements (%)	Quality Goods (%)	Like goods (%)	Like Characters (%)	Other reasons (%)	Don't know (%)	
5-6 yrs	16.7	10.0	30.0	16.7	16.7	10.0	100
12-13 yrs	76.7	0	3.3	0	13.3	6.7	100
18-19 yrs	73.3	0	0	3.3	6.7	16.7	100

Table 3.10 : Age variable against reasons for favouring advertisements

We find that more older (12-13 years and 18-19 years) respondents gave the answer "advertisements are interesting" than the younger (5-6 years) respondents "nice advertisements" answers. This means that

older children appreciate advertisements more for the entertainment that they provide than anything else since more than two-thirds of them gave this answer.

We know now why the older respondents favour certain advertisements. But what about the younger respondents? What is it that attracts them to a certain advertisement? Let us look at the table again. Note that many of them answered the question by saying that they like the goods advertised and that they like the actors in the advertisements. This only goes to show that the younger children are more attracted to the goods advertised. They are not attracted to the quality of the advertisements but rather to the news of available goods that the advertisements bring. We find also that the children are also attracted to the characters in the advertisements may they be animals or cartoons or people.

Notice also that all three age groups have the same tendency of not knowing why they like certain goods. This means that children of all stages are equally open to the risk of being influenced unconsciously, at least up till Influence Stage 2.

We have seen that advertisements that have reached Influence Stage 2 and the reasons for their success. Let us now see which are the unsuccessful advertisements and why.

The unfavoured advertisements are named as below. (Table

3.11)
Table 3.12 : Age variable against reasons for unfavouring advertisements

Respondents' Age	Unfavoured advertisements									Total (%)
	Snacks (%)	Fast Food (%)	Nutritious Food (%)	Detergent (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Cigarette (%)	Others (%)	Don't know (%)	
5-6 yrs	13.3	0	6.7	13.3	6.7	0	3.3	23.3	33.3	100
12-13 yrs	16.7	3.3	3.3	13.3	13.3	0	3.3	20.0	26.7	100
18-19 yrs	16.7	0	16.7	16.7	6.7	0	3.3	20.0	16.7	100

Table 3.11 : Age variable against pattern of unfavoured advertisements

We see that the respondents seem to have a dislike for the similar kinds of advertisements. But what exactly is it in these advertisements that make them unfavourable to the respondents? For answers, please refer to the reasons given by them (Table 3.12)

Respondents' age	Reasons for unfavouring advertisements						Total (%)
	Boring (%)	Stupid (%)	Don't like characters (%)	Don't like goods (%)	Other reasons (%)	Don't know (%)	
5-6 yrs	26.7	0	0	0	3.3	70.0	100
12-13 yrs	20.0	20.0	23.3	6.7	23.3	6.7	100
18-19 yrs	26.7	20.0	0	13.3	26.7	23.3	100

Table 3.12 : Age variable against reasons for unfavouring advertisements

Respondents of all 3 stages seem to share the opinion that their dislike for some advertisements are because the advertisements are boring. However where some of the older children find certain of the advertisements "stupid", none of the younger children seem to think so. We would assume here that the younger children in their tender age are not yet able to judge the stupidity or subtlety of certain advertisements.

Perhaps they can only value whether the advertisements appeal to their sense of sight and sound.

We see again the ignorance of the younger children from the same table. We find that many of them do not even know why they dislike certain advertisements whereas their older counterparts are able to give reasons like, "do not like goods advertised", "do not like the characters" and so on.

Income	Snacks (%)	Fast Food (%)	Clothes (%)	Decor- gents (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Cigs (%)	Others (%)	Don't know	Total (%)
< \$1500	1.3	46.7	23.3	0	0	0	6.7	6.7	13.3	100
\$1500 - \$3000	0	3.3	6.7	0	0	0	80.0	3.3	6.7	100
> \$3000	0	0	3.3	3.3	3.3	0	73.3	10.0	6.7	100

Table 3.13 : Income variable against pattern of advertisements

Therefore we can deduce here that children of all 3 stages know what they like and why they like them (although there are times when they are equally unable to point to the reasons for this liking). From the above however, we can also deduce that younger children only know that they do not like certain advertisements without knowing or realising what it is that makes them dislike these advertisements.

It is by now quite clear that the younger the children are, the less conscious or aware they are of their own feelings towards things and the rationality behind these feelings. In this case, this fact also applies to the role of the age variable in determining the achievement of Influence Stage 2.

At this point, it is appropriate to analyse the family income variable in determining Influence Stage 2. Is the achievement of this stage affected or influenced by the difference in family income?

To answer this question, respondents from all 3 income groups were asked to name their favourite advertisements. (Table 3.13)

Respondents' Family Income	Favoured Advertisements									Total (%)
	Snacks (%)	Fast Food (%)	Nutritious Food (%)	Detergents (%)	Clothes (%)	Toys (%)	Cigarette (%)	Others (%)	Don't know (%)	
< \$1500	3.3	46.7	23.3	0	0	0	6.7	6.7	13.3	100
\$1500 - \$3000	0	3.3	6.7	0	0	0	80.0	3.3	6.7	100
> \$3000	0	0	3.3	3.3	3.3	0	73.3	10.0	6.7	100

Table 3.13 : Income variable against pattern of advertisements favoured

Respondents' Family Income	Interesting advertisements	Quality goods	Like goods	Like characters	Other reasons	Don't know	Total (%)
< \$1500	3.3	46.7	23.3	0	0	0	6.7
\$1500 - \$3000	0	3.3	6.7	0	0	0	80.0
> \$3000	0	0	3.3	3.3	3.3	0	73.3

One very district result that we can see here is that the low income group (< \$1500) seem to be more attracted to the Fast Food and Nutritious Food advertisements whereas the middle class and the wealthy groups are more attracted to cigarette advertisements.

It would probably not be wrong to deduce that the less wealthy

One very distinct result that we can see here is that the low income group (< \$1500) seem to be more attracted to the Fast Food and Nutritious Food advertisements whereas the middle class and the wealthy groups are more attracted to cigarette advertisements.

It would probably not be wrong to deduce that the less wealthy are probably more attracted to food advertisements because they are more relevant to their needs and desires. Considering that they are the low income group these children tend to crave for food other than that provided at home and put it as top priority compared to luxury items like clothes and cigarettes.

On the other hand, to the more wealthy groups, food, whether fast-food or nutritious food is taken very much for granted, so much so that they no longer yearn for it and focus their attention to other items, which in this case are cigarettes.

Thus, the reason why children from different income groups favour different advertisements is due to the relevance of advertisements to the needs and desires of each income group. This only goes to show that the income variable does play a part in determining the achievement of Influence Stage 2.

It is however interesting to note that the reasons given by all 3 groups about their liking for their favourite advertisements are quite similar. (Table 3.14)

Respondents' Family Income	Reasons for favouring advertisements						Total (%)
	Interesting advertise-ment (%)	Quality Goods (%)	Like goods (%)	Like characters (%)	Other reasons (%)	Don't know (%)	
< \$1500	50.0	6.7	6.7	10.0	16.7	10.0	100
\$1500 - \$3000	56.7	3.3	10.0	3.3	10.0	10.0	100
> \$3000	60.0	0	16.7	6.7	10.0	13.3	100

Table 3.14 : Income variable against reasons for favouring advertisements

We could assume here that the respondents are not aware of the real reasons why they favour some advertisements to others. Therefore, when asked of their reasons, they give only the convenient answer, which is, "the advertisement is interesting". We do not, however, question the validity of this answer because it would be true that the respondents found advertisements of goods of their desire more interesting.

At this juncture, note that "interesting" advertisements, i.e. advertisements that have succeeded in achieving Influence Stage 2 are not necessarily advertisements that will reach Influence Stage 4, i.e. actual buying of goods advertised. We will see this later when we are discussing Influence Stage 4. Likewise, advertisements that fail to reach Influence Stage 3 might later lead to sale of goods in the end because of the information of the goods that they bring, rather than due to the attractiveness of the advertisements.

Therefore, be reminded that interesting advertisements need not necessarily mean successful advertisements.

We have already seen how the age and income variable play their role in determining Influence Stage 2. We shall now see if these variables do the same in determining Influence Stage 3 i.e. wish to buy goods advertised.

To answer this, we asked the respondents if they could buy the goods in their favourite advertisements if they had the money, which, of course is equal to asking them if they had a wish to buy the goods advertised in their favourite advertisements.

Against the age of the respondents, the answers are as below (Table 3.15).

Respondents' Age	Wish to buy goods in favourite advertisements				Total (%)
	Yes, because like advertisements (%)	Yes, because need it (%)	Yes, because friends have it (%)	No (%)	
5-6 yrs	66.7	0	3.3	30.0	100
12-13 yrs	43.3	23.3	0	33.3	100
18-19 yrs	33.3	20.0	3.3	43.3	100

Table 3.15 : Age variable against respondents' wish to buy goods advertised in their favourite advertisements

Here we find that younger children are more likely to wish to purchase the goods advertised merely because they like the advertisements compared to the older children who answered that they would buy the goods because they needed them. We also find that there are more older children who decidedly say that they would not like to buy the goods advertised in their favourite advertisements even if they can afford them because they neither need them, like them or envious of friends who have them.

Therefore, we find here that the older children are more capable of differentiating and separating their liking for the advertisements compared to the younger children who take the advertisements at face value and judge the goods advertised by their advertisements.

stage with We all know that children of various ages have different But interests and needs. Therefore, what decides whether a certain advertise- ment is successful in bringing out a child's wish to buy the goods want to advertised also depends on the age of the child and the relevance of the advertisement and the goods advertised to the needs and interests of the child. We will now see the role of family incomes in determining Influence Stage 3. To see this, let us take advertisements that have already achieved Influence Stage 3. The respondents were asked as to whether they would like to buy the toys advertised. Here are their answers (Table 3.16) the most popular advertisements in the children's eyes, from all 3 age groups (for age, the advertisement had to be relevant to the child's age is to avoid any confusion).

Respondents' Age	Wish to buy toys advertised?		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
5-6 yrs	93.3	6.7	100
12-13 yrs	23.3	76.7	100
18-19 yrs	3.3	96.7	100

Table 3.16 : Age variable against respondents' wish to buy the toys advertised

It is very clear that the younger children have a wish to buy the toys because toys are relevant to their interests, whereas the older children have already outgrown them.

Therefore we see beyond any doubt here that the age variable definitely plays a role in determining whether a certain advertisement achieves Influence Stage 3. An advertisement may have reached this

stage with some children but not with children of other age groups. But this does not mean that it has failed. The real success of the advertisement depends on the target of the advertisement:- "who does it want to reach?"

We will now see the role of family incomes in determining Influence Stage 3. To see this, let us take advertisements that have already achieved Influence stage 1 and 2 and which have been ranked as the most popular advertisements in the children's eyes, from all 3 age groups (for eg., cigarette and fast food advertisements). This is to avoid any confusion.

To test the achievement of Influence Stage 3 by these cigarette advertisements, respondents were asked as to whether they would smoke. Those who would like to smoke said that they feel that smoking like to smoke when they are older. Their answers against their family income are as below (Table 3.17)

Respondents' Family Income	Wish to smoke when older?		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
< \$1500	3.3	96.7	100
\$1500 - \$3000	13.3	86.7	100
> \$3000	6.7	93.3	100

Table 3.17 : Age variable against respondents' wish to smoke when older

compared to We find that although the children can remember and favour the cigarette advertisements, very few of them would like to smoke when they are older. Here is proof that an interesting advertisement is not necessarily a successful advertisement. A lot also depends on a person's socialization and values. They are already confident of their own social

and financial stand. Moreover they have also their health to think about. As for the role of the income variable in influencing the achievement of Influence Stage 3 by the advertisements, we see in Table 3.17 that the middle income group is exceptionally more interested in smoking as compared to the other two groups. This difference is rather interesting considering that the respondents are of the same age groups, and we pause to ponder on the reasons for this difference. To answer this, we asked the respondents why would they or would they not like to smoke. Those who would like to smoke said that they feel that smoking is "classy", "stylish", "manly", "macho", etc., while those who would not like to smoke said that "smoking is a waste of money", "not good for health", "brings cancer, tuberculosis", etc. Concerning the achievement of Influence Stage 4 by advertisements, i.e. the stage where advertisements succeed in bringing actual sales to the advertisers, we will discuss the role of age and income variables in determining this ultimate stage.

From these answers we can deduce a few possibilities on to the difference in interest, which is brought about by the income variable. Seeing that smoking was termed as "classy" and "stylish", it is possible that the middle income group is attracted to it because they feel that it is a way of elevating their image to a more classy and stylish level. (Note: this however does not mean that we are discarding any possibility that these items will be bought by the respondents due to other factors because being lack of money to spend, they would tend to consider smoking as a waste of money (\$2.00 - \$2.40 to a poor man is worth a lot more as for items, etc.).) On the other hand, the lower income group may not share this opinion other than influence of advertisements, eg. parents' instructions, need for items, etc.).

compared to its worth to wealthier man), and as a hazard to health (which will bring to higher medical expenses). The higher income group on the other hand might not be attracted to smoking because they do not have a need to proof their class and style through smoking (like the middle income group) as they are already confident of their own social and financial stand. Moreover they have also their health to think about.

Respondents'	Tried any of snacks advertised?	Total
5-6 yrs	56.7	100
12-13 yrs	86.7	100

Therefore, we find that the income variable does play a role in determining Influence Stage 3. Children from different financial backgrounds do vary in their consumer behaviour.

Concerning the achievement of Influence Stage 4 by advertisements, i.e. the stage where advertisements succeed in bringing actual sales to the advertisers, we will now see the role of age and income variables in determining this ultimate stage.

Dealing with the age variable as a factor in influencing the achievement of Influence Stage 4 by advertisements, we will exclude the advertisements of items which are equally irrelevant to the interests of all our respondents eg. detergent advertisements, and also those which are equally popular to all the various age groups of children and have been bought by most of the respondents, eg. Fast Food advertisements (Note: this however does not mean that we are discarding any possibility that these items will be bought by the respondents due to other factors other than influence of advertisements, eg. parents' instructions, need for items, etc.).

Instead in this stage, we will focus on advertisements of items which are generally more relevant to the interests of majority of the respondents, starting with the snacks advertisements.

The respondents were asked if they have tried any one of the snacks advertised. Here were their answers (Table 3.18).

Respondents' age	Tried any of snacks advertised?		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
5-6 yrs	56.7	43.3	100
12-13 yrs	86.7	13.3	100
18-19 yrs	73.3	26.7	100

Table 3.18 : Age variable against real purchase of snacks advertised

We find that despite our expectation that younger children are more likely to be influenced by snacks advertisements, it is amongst the adolescent group that we found the highest number of children who have tried the snacks. An explanation for this finding is that the younger children are more restricted by their parents from eating snacks between meals for fear that they might later lose appetite for their main meals (This information was gathered from the parents and the children themselves). The adolescents on the other hand have more leave and permission to eat as they please and they are still in that age where they have to

munch to overcome their boredom and ever-demanding hunger, hence the explanation to why they seem to consume more snacks than the younger children. Meanwhile the young adults seem to take more snacks than the young children but less than the adolescence, probably because they are free to eat what they please but have come to a stage where they are losing interest and taste for snacks and munchies.

We have seen that the age variable does play a role in Influence Stage 4. Let us look at the advertisements of another item, (i.e. toys) to see again if age variable does indeed play its role.

The respondents were asked if they owned or have bought any of the toys advertised. Their answers (Table 3.19)

Respondents' Age	Bought any toys advertised?		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
5-6 yrs	50	50	100
12-13 yrs	23.3	76.7	100
18-19 yrs	3.3	96.7	100

Table 3.19 : Age variable against purchase of toys advertised

It is very clear that the age variable does indeed play its role here. This is because age influences a person's needs, which in turn determines whether he/she would buy such items advertised to fulfill

these needs. The younger the children are, the more the tendency for them to buy the toys because toys are more relevant to their needs as compared to the older children. In fact, from the answers that the younger children gave, we find that they are so influenced by the advertisements that they even own Barbie Dolls (Note : please be reminded that our respondents are boys).



Figure 5 : Barbie Doll advertisement

We shall take the two same examples, i.e. the snacks' advertisements and the toys advertisements to check if family income affects respondents' answers if they bought any of the toys advertised. Their Influence Stage 4.

First, the snacks advertisements. Respondents from the 3 income groups were asked if they had bought or tried any of the snacks advertised. Their answers are as follows (Table 3.20).

Respondents' Family Income	Tried any of snacks advertised		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
< \$1500	56.7	43.3	100
\$1500 - \$3000	80.0	20.0	100
> \$3000	80.0	20.0	100

Table 3.20 : Income variable against trial purchase of snacks advertised

We find that the low income group seem to be the group where the least people have tried the snacks advertised although they all (as we have found out in Influence Stage 2) have almost the same interests in snacks. This difference could be due to affordability. Obviously, the poorer respondents could not spare money for things more than necessary compared to their wealthier counterparts. Here, we see that income group does play a part. Let us, however, look at another example to confirm, or to disprove our hypothesis. For this we will look again at the toys advertisements. The respondents were asked if they bought any of the toys advertised. Their answers are as below (Table 3.21).

Just consider one question: "Who do I want to reach - is it the younger people or the older people, is it the low income group, the middle income group or is it the rich?" Only after considering these factors can we produce an advertisement which is not only interesting but appealing to the aimed audience, in taste as well as in affordability.

References

Respondents' Family Income	Bought any of toys advertised?		Total (%)
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
< \$1500	6.7	93.3	100
\$1500 - \$3000	30.0	70.0	100
> \$3000	40.0	60.0	100

Table 3.21 : Income variable against purchase of toys advertised

We find that we can indeed confirm that income does affect the achievement of Influence Stage 4 by any advertisements. In other words, an advertisement may have influenced millions of people at once but what leads to Influence Stage 4 is due to affordability of the audience.

Therefore in this Chapter, we are made aware that before an advertisement can be truly successful, a lot of factors have to be taken into consideration, two of which are the age and family income of the audience. An intensity advertisement which has all the qualities stated in Chapter 3 need not necessarily be a successful advertisement in bringing actual sales. Other factors also contribute towards its success. Most importantly, an advertiser must consider one question: "Who do I want to reach - is it the younger people or the older people, is it the low income group, the middle income group or is it the rich?" Only after considering these factors can we produce an advertisement which is not only interesting but appealing to the aimed audience, in taste as well as in affordability.

CHAPTER 3

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5. Op. cit.

The Intended Effects

- a) attention to and recall of product brands and attributes;

From our study it is clear that children pay attention to television advertisements. We also found that children's level of

CHAPTER 5

EFFECTS OF TELEVISION ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN IN PETALING JAYA

It is an accepted procedure in this country to leave the task of educating consumers in the willing hands of advertisers. This is because many school systems consider consumer education as a peripheral option and fail to realize that if schools do not teach market place skills, advertisers will. Therefore, it is inevitable that most of our advertisers contain information representing the sellers' interests than the people's.

It may be assumed that advertisers with this advantage will set out only to promote their products. The direct results from this promotion we call the "intended effects". However, we cannot fail to overlook the fact that besides these intended effects, advertising also brings results that confuse, mislead, or, promote unhealthy and socialy undersirable behaviour. These results, which we assume that the advertisers do not set out to bring, we call the "unintended effects".

The Intended Effects

- a) attention to and recall of product brands and attributes;

From our study it is clear that children pay attention to television advertisements. We also found that children's level of

The attention seems to be dependent on several factors. Attention is likely to be greater to advertisements for products relevant to children, and to commercial with higher levels of audio complexity or physical action. Children's attention seems to be enhanced by the presence of audio elements such as lively music, singing, rhyming, and sound effects, and visual elements such as active movement, animation and visual changes in general.

a) desire for advertised products;

There is also considerable evidence in this study about learning from advertisements. We find that the respondents are able to recall or recognize products and product attributes.

c) trial and repeat purchases of products, or purchase requests to parents;

The existing evidence in this study indicates that advertising is at least moderately successful in creating positive attitudes towards a product and in stimulating requests for the product. In our survey, we found that a large majority of both children and mothers reported that the children asked for the toy and food items advertised on television.

The Unintended Effects

a) short-range effects;

One of the issues here is the ability of children to distinguish between programme and advertisement material. This is no surprise considering that some advertisers schedule their advertisements (which feature some famous characters) to appear adjacent to the programmes which also feature these same characters. For example, the cartoon advertisements which appear between cartoon programmes. One local example of this is the Fanta advertisement advertising soft drinks.

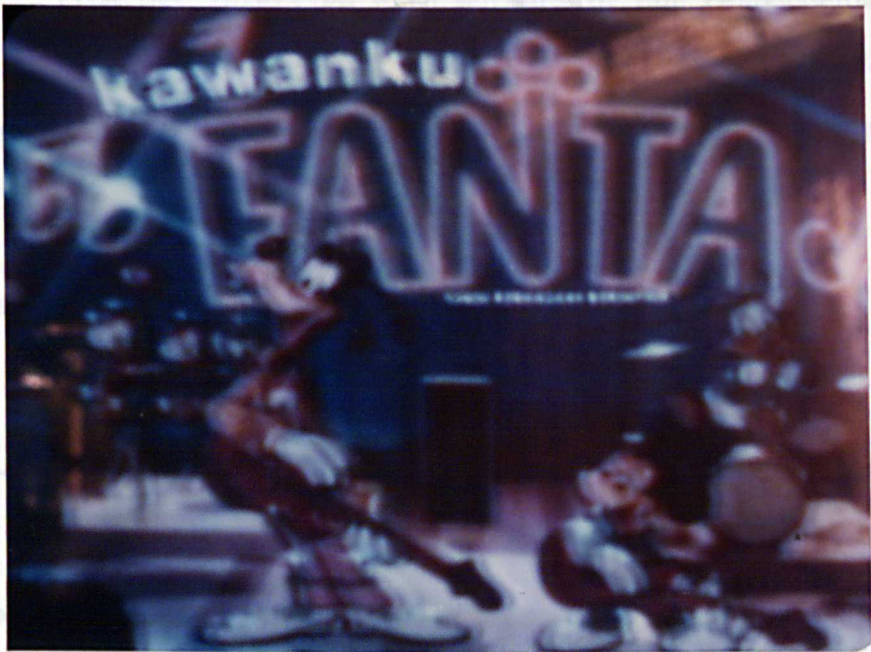


Figure 6 : "Fanta" advertisement

From our survey we found that the younger respondents either expressed confusion or based their discrimination of advertisements on effect or on superficial perceptual ones.

The respondents also failed to understand the selling intent of advertisements, especially the younger ones who suggested little comprehension and/or the low salience of persuasive intent as a critical feature in advertising.

Advertisements also make the children, especially the younger ones have an incorrect assessment of product performance, as of place and advertising, eg. comparing advertising claims with actual product.

From our interview with mothers of our respondents, we also found that advertisements act as an encouragement of unsafe behaviour through imitation, eg., swinging on a rope like the character in the Bobo (a local snack) advertisement.

c) long-range effects;

One of the issues here is the influence of advertising on children's development of consumer skills. From our study, we have found that television advertisements encourage inappropriate standards for consumer choices, eg. snacks and sweets appear to provide more sweetness and fun than nutritional value, etc.

We also found from our respondents' mothers that advertisements can act as a promoter of parent-child communication and/or

conflict. According to them, especially the economically disadvantaged families, requests by children very often strain parent-child relations. These parents have to deny most request because of a lack of financial resource. This denial, according to them is frustrating to both parent and child, leading to feelings of guilt and resentment. Sometimes, requests complicate family consumption priorities, leading to maladaptive practices, especially among the poor.

However we must also not only look at the negative aspect of advertising. On the other hand, we found among some of the respondents that advertising can also teach the children about workings of market place and advertising, eg. comparing advertising claims with actual product.

c) long-range effects;

In regard to the possible longer-range cumulative consequences of children's television advertising, most of the influence of advertisements on formation of children's behavioural patterns.

Even from our study itself, we find that there are so many negative effects that television advertising can bring to children besides the ones already mentioned above. We will now look at them. We found from our survey that one of the effects of advertising is encouragement or reinforcement of unhealthy or hazardous behaviour (for eg., poor nutritional habits, drug abuse, etc.)

One very obvious effect of advertising is that it produces materialistic children. Advertisements convey a sense of overimportance to the decision to buy one brand or another. Brand differences are stressed, thus sensitizing the child to materialism and being a consumer which encourages an unfavourable social value is the local Maggie Mee

Hoon advertisement about a young boy of a king who commands a servant old enough to be his mother in a rude manner. The advertisement also shows how frightened the old servant was of him and quickly got him his meal. It is as though the advertisement is telling the children that if they want anything from their elders, this is the way to get it.

However we must also not only look at the negative aspect of advertisements. In certain of our respondents, we found that advertising helps children to develop consumer skills. They learn from their experiences if the goods advertised are all that the advertisements claim them to be.

Now that we have seen both the intended as well as the unintended effects of television advertising, we find that the intended effects are few and that most of the unintended effects are not very favourable to the physical, mental, cultural and behavioural well-being of children.

Even from our study itself, we find that there are so many negative effects that television advertising can bring to children besides the ones already mentioned above. We will now look at them.

One very obvious effect of advertising is that it produces materialistic children. Advertisements convey a sense of overimportance to the decision to buy one brand or another. Brand differences are stressed, thus sensitizing the child to materialism and being a consumer

rather than to more profound moral and ethnical values. The sheer weight of the perhaps thousands of children's and adults' advertisements that a child under twelve may see a year can give the market-place undue prominence and encourage greed and selfishness in the child.

Advertising, we also found, develops a pattern of mistrust among the children. Some very exposed items on advertisements can lead to some young consumers to a deja vu feeling when they get the product, only to find that its exciting and promising image as conveyed by an advertisement may not be confirmed by subsequent experience with the product. This incompatibility could be experienced as a failure situation by some children. They learn to distrust and this later leads to cynicism towards other sources of information and authority.

From our survey, we also found that some exaggerated claims in advertisements also influences the children's learning of responsibility. A child may consider himself inadequate if he cannot do something set forth in an advertisement. For example, certain advertisement shows all the kids in it drinking a certain brand of drinks who can share beautifully. If the child drinks the same drink and still cannot share, he might think lowly of himself.

Over-stated and exaggerated claims in advertisements, we found, also encourage children to want things that they do not need. For example, the local "Kiko" clothes advertisements which emphasize how stylish and beautiful the children wearing "Villa" clothes are. This

This sort of advertisements according to the respondents parents, make a child who has already got a sufficient number of clothes to still insist on more clothes, like those advertised of course.



Figure 7 : "Kiko" Advertisement

Another effect of advertising that we found in our respondents was that these children have a wrong conception and outlook on life. Many of them believe that their personality can be defined by the possession of things - all pleasures of life are objects, objects that can be replaced. This effect is brought about by the advertisements taking unfair advantage of youthful needs. They rely heavily on approaches to a child's self-concept and peer relationships. Advertisers unite their advertisements based on the needs of children - food, security, friends, love, etc. They then write advertisements appealing to these needs, making the

children feel inadequate and frightened, feelings which the advertisers subtly suggest they can get rid of with the purchase of certain items. This attack on the children's needs, as a result, brings wounds which are too deep to be seen by the human eye. As a result, these children might grow up with a wrong conception and outlook on life.

Many sales messages on local television indirectly encourage children to live in a world of fantasy by using a great deal of imagination and fantasy. These advertisements show a really fantastic world where everything in it is alive, including vegetables, trees, tables, etc. They also use personifications of the sun, sounds, etc. For example the local "Kellogg's Rice Bubbles" advertisement where the sounds "snap", "crackle" and "pop" are actually little people who can communicate with the child actor. Another such example is the sustagen advertisement where creatures the size of the tin give instructions on how to mix the drink.



Figure 8 : "Sustagen" advertisement

As a result of such advertisements, children are encouraged to live in a world of fantasy, or worse, to lose the ability to distinguish fantasy from reality, because the fantasy has been linked to a material object.

We also found that our respondents are confused as to which stage of time they are really in. In one advertisement they see high modern technology, in another they see Tarzan-like clad people. This confuses them, especially the young ones, and give them a picture of modern life that is unrealistic.

Children in Malaysia whose consumer education depends largely on the advertisers are also inappropriately and wrongly educated.

Information contained in advertisements is insufficient and inadequate. Specifically, the amount and quality of information on nutrition and health in such messages is inadequate. It comes as no surprise then that many of our respondents think that a rational way to go about food selection is to do it based on a jingle, a whimsey, etc. rather than on nutritional values.

To further stress on the negative effects of advertising on children's physical well-being, we must comment on the stress of most advertisements of edibles to children on sugar, sweetness, chocolate, to etc. If this is all the nutrition education that a child can get, then it is no surprise that many of our respondents' parents complain of their children having a bad nutritional habit, full of calories and little else.

As to the emotional and psychological well-being of children, we find that advertisements do impose meanings and pleasures of growing up on the children even before they have grown up. The natural joys and pleasures that a child should feel when he first succeeds in something and bathe in the joy of using his powers, when he first uses his newly emerged power for the first time to gain a friend, and when he can love, plan and create, etc. are overtaken and camouflaged by the joys, the material joys that the advertisements offer him. Therefore, his meanings of pleasures and growing up are changed. The child becomes a person who is not really an adolescent or an adult either. He is someone who is not fully recovered from childhood. Ron Goulart¹ calls him 'super-kid'. Basically he is a consumer who graduates from kid consumer to affluent teenage consumer to young married consumer. This is the worst and feared effect of advertising on children, and judging from the way things stand right now, our respondents are very much in the danger of being a super-kid.

That about sums up the negative effects of advertising on children. There is no doubt that they are many but we must also not forget that there are also positive effects such as children's consumer education, sponsored children's programmes, etc. Moreover, according to Charles Winick et. al's² opinion, television advertising does not necessarily always have bad effects on children as children are not as gullible as they may outwardly seem.

Of course, it is interesting to ponder on this view, but if we apply it to our respondents in this study, we find that this view is not applicable and that the negative effects mentioned earlier do impose themselves in our respondents.

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CHAPTER 6

We also found that background factors such as age and family income variables play a great role in all four Influence

Stages, but in different ways in different stages. These variables

affect This study set out to examine the level of influence that television advertising have on children in Petaling Jaya, the reasons for and the elements of this influence and also not forgetting, the effects of this influence.

We have also seen how it is inevitable that television

advertis In the preceeding chapters, we have seen and analysed the concepts of influence of advertising, of children, of television, etc. We have also seen various definitions and opinions of various writers and experts concerning the topic that we are dealing with.

effects on children, based on our respondents, we saw how the negative

Results from our survey show which are the influential/non-influential advertisements and the reasons for this success/failure. As a result, we found that advertisements which are considered interesting by the respondents have specific elements in them such as pleasant

characters, relation to audience, natural conveyance, lots of life, etc.

Advertisements which are considered boring on the other hand are found to be lacking of these elements. We also found that although very often it is the interesting advertisements that bring in the sales, this is not necessarily true for every item, every time. There are advertisements which are considered very interesting by most of the respondents (for eg. cigarette advertisements) but which fianlly fail to bring in children's business to their advertisers because of various other factors, such as the respondents' age, income, background, culture, values, etc. the

Suggestion: We also found that background factors such as age and family income variables play a great determining role in all four Influence Stages, but in different ways in different stages. These variables affect the degree of influence of advertisements on children because they bring with them other factors such as differences in taste, in relevance, in affordability, in value, in maturity, etc.

We have also seen how it is inevitable that television advertising should bring effects (either intended or unintended) to the children's physical, mental, emotional and psychological well-being. Although there are a few positive effects of advertising and although there are a few views that advertising does not necessarily have bad effects on children, based on our respondents, we saw how the negative effects imposed themselves on our respondents more strongly than the positive effects. In other words, we found the advertisements to bring more negative than positive effects to the children in Petaling Jaya.

Despite all the undesirable effects that advertising bring however, it cannot be denied that advertising is also an indispensable aspect of our modern and progressive country. Therefore, advertising must continue. This, however does not mean that advertising should be given free leave to continue reducing and abusing the children as well as the ignorant and vulnerable adults. Instead, steps should be taken to improve and control the advertising industry so that it does not become a bad influence to the well-being of the audience, but a means of truthful, accurate and fair information of existing goods in the market.

Suggestions To Improve The Malaysian Television Advertising Industry

...directed at very young children, etc.

Since this study is concerned with Malaysian children, we will see how the Malaysian television advertisements can be improved for the advertisements' censoring to different bodies like the Kementerian Kesihatan Iklan Ubat (KKLIU), Kementerian Perdagangan dan Perindustrian, Lembaga

Firstly, considering that there is no specific Act that deals with the subject of advertising, specifically, it is suggested that one be drafted dedicated to deal with and cover all legal aspects of advertising, especially what is permitted to be shown on advertisements and what not. Since we already have quite a reliable set of Code of

Therefore, it is suggested here that a specific exclusive board Ethnic, it is suggested that the Act be derived from here and further be set up to sift, analyse and evaluate advertisements before they can be improved after a few reliable and dependable studies on the needs of our Malaysian society. In other words, there should be a board which is wholly dedicated to censoring advertisements. Qualified psychologists, sociologists and economists should be lined to be part of this censor board because

a) affirming disclosures located in the body of advertisements indirect, the for and directed to children.

b) affirming disclosures and nutritional information conceived in separate advertisements, funded by advertisers of products advertised to children.

c) limitations upon particular advertising messages used and/or techniques used to advertise to very young children, or to analyse highly lorigenic products to all children.

d) limitations upon the time and frequency of advertisements
education, directed at very young children, etc.

Secondly, it is felt that the present procedure of leaving
values of certain snacks advertisements should open the children's eyes
advertisements' censoring to different bodies like the Kementerian
Kesihatan Iklan Ubat (KKLIU), Kementerian Perdagangan dan Perindustrian,
Lembaga Penapis Filem Negara, TV3's censor board, RTM's censor board, etc.
is not a very good one. These bodies have so much of other things on
their hands besides the censoring of advertisements that they can not
concentrate on the sole duty of censoring advertisements.

Therefore, it is suggested here that a specific exclusive board
against such advertisements to the United Nations, Kementerian Perdagangan
dan Perindustrian which handles such complaints.
passed for viewing. In other words, there should be a board which is
wholly dedicated to censoring advertisements. Qualified psychologists,
sociologists and economists should be lined to be part of this censor
board because they would be best suited to spot all the direct and
indirect, the positive and the negative effects of advertisements so
that any undesirable elements in advertisements can be eliminated to make
them safe for viewing (especially the children's).

Thirdly, being aware that the responsibility of protecting
children from the seduction of advertising also lies on other parties,
it is suggested that the Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia adopt consumer
education as one of the subjects in schools as this would produce
children who are more aware of the intent, the exaggerated and unrealistic

claims of certain advertisements. We also hope that with Consumer education, children will be more aware of what is good and what is bad for their well-being. For example, consumer education on the nutritional values of certain snacks advertisements should open the children's eyes to the real quality of the snacks advertised and hopefully opt for better diets.

It is also suggested that the Consumer Associations assist in this effort by keeping their eyes and ears open to any advertisements which may have slipped the censor boards' notice and which may be carrying the wrong messages and effects. They can then launch complaints against such advertisements to the Unit Konsumer, Kementerian Perdagangan dan Perindustrian which handles such complaints.

It is also suggested that the consumer associations assist in educating the parents themselves or the deceptive and exaggerated claims of advertisements so that they in turn can guide their children in perceiving these advertisements.

Parents on their part can help their children by teaching them to value and appreciate themselves so that he/she would not feel the need to substitute his/her personality with materials and things to compete with his friends and peers. This would also help him/her not to feel inadequate if he cannot do what is exaggeratedly set forth in the advertisements.

Recommendations For Future Research

In the hope of an improved and a healthier advertising industry, it is also suggested that a few other researches be carried out on advertising so that appropriate, effective and fair policies can be formulated towards this aim.

In terms of new research, it is recommended that future studies move in these directions:

- a) Research to test specific hypothesis or premises on which existing or proposed regulations are based;

Such studies need not be elaborate, time consumive nor expensive to conduct. If properly designed, they can

- c) Research on children's perceptions of individual commercials; have real impact on resolving some outstanding problems and issues on advertising.

- b) Research on role of television and television advertising in children's lives;

This research is to determine more definitely the importance of television as an influence on children in comparison with other major socialization factors, including parents, relatives, peers, school, church and other media.

The research proposed here would not be focused on television, but rather on children and the shaping factors in their

environment, including television and television advertising.

Although such a research would not be a simple or technique so that it may ultimately be possible to develop an inexpensive one to conduct and would require the extension of current research methods and the development of that they are in fact, truthful, accurate, and fair to new techniques of measurement, this effort would be justified by the importance of the results. This research

should employ a variety of techniques and measures to determine the relative importance of and the interactions between the sources from which children acquire the information that influences their values and attitudes and their behaviour.

c) Research on children's perceptions of individual commercials;

Such a research would resemble the type of studies routinely conducted by advertising agencies in preparing advertisements, except that it would be conducted systematically, emphasizing randomized samples of advertisements and children, examining the intended and unintended effects. It should also include adult advertisements although it would concentrate on advertisements intended for children. The purpose of this research is to allow the development of methods to identify specific advertisements which are confusing or misleading to children, and to accumulate data

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